

ALF warns Kuwait, Gulf states

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — An Iraqi-based faction of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Tuesday threatened to carry out attacks against Kuwaiti leaders, oil installations and Gulf war allies if 10 Palestinians condemned to death in Kuwait for "collaborating" with Iraq were executed. The Arab Liberation Front (ALF) said the governments of the mostly Western U.S.-led coalition that drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait in February 1991 "are legitimate targets for our revenge." The ALF accused Kuwaiti leaders of "treason" and said Kuwait targets could include its palaces and embassies as well as oil wells. "We warn the symbols of treason among (the Kuwaiti ruling) Al Sabah family, agents of America and Zionism, against any attempt to execute our comrades," its leadership in the Israeli-occupied territories said in a statement to AFP. "We tell them that we are capable of reaching them where they are." The oil wells, which are guarded by dogs faithful to their American and Zionist masters, can be set ablaze more than once and then it will be too late for regrets," the statement added.



Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرائي

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Volume 17 Number 5332

AMMAN WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 1993 THUL HIJEH 26, 1413

Price: 150 Fils

PLO denies meetings with Israeli officials

TUNIS (R) — A senior Palestinian official has denied that Palestinian and Israeli officials met recently in Europe, the Palestinian news agency Wafa said Monday. Quoting Mahmoud Abbas, a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee member, Wafa said reports about such meetings were "groundless." Wafa also said that Mr. Abbas and Palestinian chief negotiator Faisal Al Hussein did not visit Oslo or Vienna recently, as some Israeli sources reported. Mr. Abbas and Mr. Hussein last week visited the United Arab Emirates and Qatar in order to improve relations between the PLO and Gulf states.

Exiles ready to study new Israeli proposals

MARI AL ZOUHOUR (AFP) — A spokesman for 396 Palestinian expellees stranded in South Lebanon said Tuesday they were ready to examine any new Israeli proposal to allow them home. "We continue to respect the Israeli-American deal but if there are new proposals we are ready to examine them," Abdul Aziz Rantisi said in remarks coinciding with the resumption in Washington of Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Arafat to have Vienna talks with Kozyrev

TUNIS (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat left for Vienna on Tuesday to address a U.N. human rights conference there and hold talks with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, Palestinian sources said. Mr. Arafat was to meet Mr. Kozyrev late Tuesday and would address the U.N. World Conference on Human Rights Wednesday, they added.

U.N. programme in Iraq is alive

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A senior United Nations official said Tuesday that the humanitarian programme in Iraq was "still alive" despite the departure of U.N. guards and a lack of funds, saying \$50 million in aid could be forthcoming soon. The United Nations last month first announced it would withdraw all of its 236 guards left in Iraq by mid-June unless almost \$500 million were found to continue the programme. Almost all were in northern Iraq. A total of 93 guards protecting humanitarian supplies to Kurds in northern Iraq have been pulled out since May, including 43 who left Kurdish-controlled areas Sunday. "The programme is still alive and will continue," Mohammad Zejjari, coordinator of U.N. humanitarian activities in Iraq, said. "Seven countries have promised to give \$50 million to the programme," he said, adding that the United Nations could also count \$30 million worth of subsidies left over from last year.

Algerian psychiatrist dies after stabbing

ALGER (AFP) — A prominent Algerian psychiatrist, Mahfoud Boucebbi, died Tuesday after being stabbed by the armed assailant as he entered the suburban hospital where he practised, a reliable source said. Algerian radio had announced earlier that Dr. Boucebbi, head of the psychiatric ward at the Drid Hocine Hospital, had been stabbed several times in the chest by the duo who were apparently waiting for him in front of the hospital. The motive of the attack was unclear.

U.S. offers Syria-Israel guarantees as talks begin

Mixed signals from Israelis, Palestinians

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The United States would consider guaranteeing security between Israel and Syria if the two long-time foes conclude a solid peace agreement, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Tuesday.

But as negotiations resumed after a month-long recess, Syria and Israel were in sharp disagreement over the future of the strategic Golan Heights and far from an accord.

Syrian negotiator Muwaffak Al Allaf said Israel has to surrender all of the land under U.N. Security Council resolutions or bear the blame for a breakdown in the peace talks.

Israeli negotiator Itamar Rabinovich, on the other hand, said Israel would not say how much land it would yield "until certain questions are answered properly."

Talks also resumed between Israel and Palestinian, Lebanese and Jordanian delegations as the Clinton administration appealed for what a senior U.S. official called "real engagement on substance."

"We can't build bridges over oceans but we can build bridges over rivers," the official said.

The statement reflected the wide gap that remains between the parties after more than 19 months of negotiations.

But Mr. Christopher, posing for pictures with visiting French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, stated on an active role for the Clinton administration once the two sides drew closer — and after they reached an agreement.

"The possibility of security guarantees has always been one of the matters that are before the parties," he said. "There are a number of aspects in that negotiation that are necessary before we reach that question."

But Mr. Christopher said, "the United States would be willing to consider such a role if it is possible for the parties to come to a sound agreement with respect to the Golan Heights."

Syria wants the land back, much as Egypt recovered all of Sinai after a 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

"Otherwise," Mr. Allaf said, "Israel will bear the responsibility for the failure of another round of these peace talks."

Mr. Christopher met separately with foreign ministers Farouk Sharaa of Syria, Amr Musa of Egypt and Shimon Peres of Israel in Vienna Monday.

On a higher level, President Clinton has exchanged letters with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, said a senior official, who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

"The exchanges were very substantive," the official said.

He declined to provide any details except to say it dealt with the central issues in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations.

Mr. Rabinovich denied that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had told an Israeli parliamentary committee that Israel would never withdraw completely from the Golan Heights in exchange for full peace with Syria.

On another front, Israel is talking to a Palestinian delegation

about elections for a self-governing authority on the West Bank and in Gaza.

The official said the Palestinians would run their own police department and control "other aspects of security" besides taking over education and health care.

In other developments related to the peace process:

Some significant differences have arisen during the preparatory meetings held last week with the Americans, and the new session does not look too encouraging," Palestinian delegation spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said.

Israeli spokeswoman Ruth Yaron said that her delegation did not want to raise false hopes.

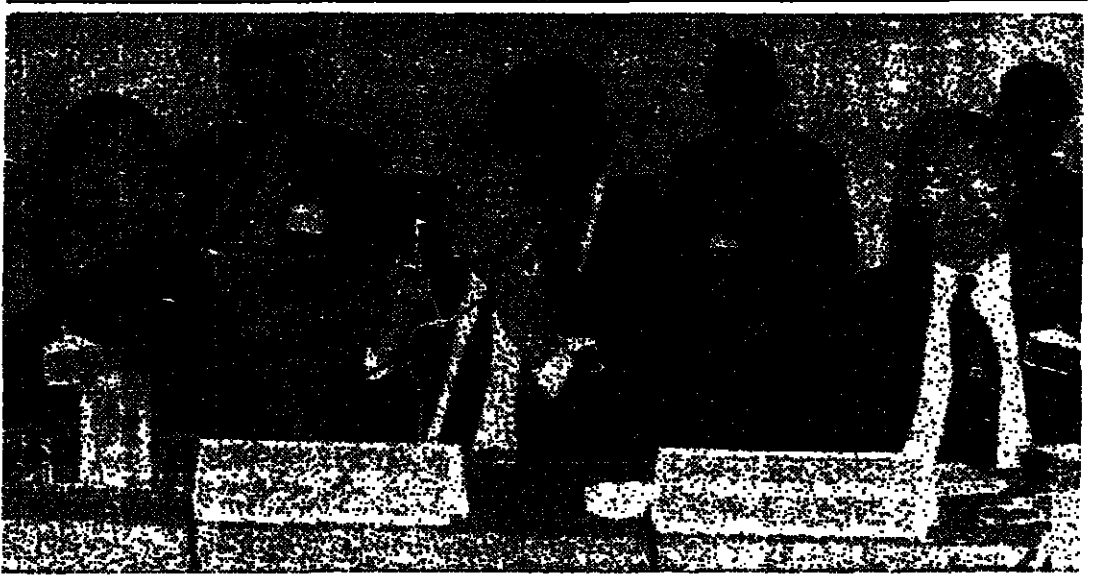
"Experience has taught us to be realistic, to avoid disappointment. Nevertheless, real progress could be achieved during the upcoming talks which promise to be very serious," Ms. Yaron added.

During the ninth round of the talks which ended here May 13, the Israelis and Palestinians exchanged draft declarations of principle on interim autonomy for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but failed to reach a consensus.

On Thursday and Friday, Palestinian negotiators meeting with U.S. officials failed to get a pledge for a more active U.S. role in the talks, Dr. Ashrawi said.

The Palestinians also protested the Israeli decision more than two

(Continued on page 10)



Tibet's exiled spiritual leader Dalai Lama (left), Argentine's Adolfo Perez Esquivel and American

Norman E. Borlaug attend a meeting of Nobel Peace laureates in Vienna Tuesday (AFP photo)

Dalai Lama makes victorious entry at human rights forum

VIENNA (Agencies) — Tibet's Dalai Lama made a triumphant entry Tuesday at the U.N. World Conference on Human Rights, where his exclusion under pressure by China had triggered five days of controversy.

The bespectacled Buddhist clergyman received a warm welcome from supporters here despite warnings by Peking his presence ran counter to the conference's aims and could hurt China's ties with Austria.

U.N. organisers pushed by China, decided Thursday to bar the Dalai Lama from the first world conference on human

rights in 25 years as well as a meeting of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that preceded it.

They said the pro-independence Tibetan leader had not been invited and could not enter the site. A storm of protest followed and a dozen Nobel Peace Prize winners invited by host Austria boycotted the opening session Monday.

But after talks between conference officials and Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock, elected chairman of the two-week gathering, the Dalai Lama was cleared to speak to the NGOs and Nobel laureates.

China, which has occupied Tibet since 1950, reacted bitterly to the news that their arch critic would be able to speak at the site where delegates from 183 countries and 1,000 NGOs are meeting.

"We are opposed to any official contact between the Dalai Lama and the representatives of all countries," a spokesman said in Peking. He said host Austria "should be obliged to apply U.N. rules to assure the smooth conduct of the conference."

The Dalai Lama, who without trying became the star of the human rights conference, refrained from making any direct reference to China in a prepared speech to the NGOs he had been scheduled to address Monday.

But he attacked China's position that Asian and other Third

World countries could not be bound by Western nations on human rights. The Dalai Lama said neither he nor a majority of Asians agreed with this view.

In other developments: — the conference unanimously adopted a resolution from Bosnia to appeal to the U.N. Security Council to stop the genocide in Bosnia.

Malaysia's delegation said members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference met earlier Tuesday to agree to express their support for Bosnia.

Delegations including Pakistan, Gambia, Salvador, Tunisia, Algeria, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran, all spoke to support the appeal.

Russia sided with the United States and Western nations in their efforts to set up a U.N. high commissioner for human rights to combat abuses worldwide.

Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said Russia also supported proposals to establish a permanent international tribunal to punish human rights abusers.

"It would be for me quite a frustration if the conference failed to approve at least those two ideas," Mr. Kozyrev told reporters before his speech.

An Iranian human rights organisation and an association of Austrian writers denounced Iran's disregard for human rights and a general "attitude of contempt" in dealing with the issue.



RAGING VIOLENCE: A Bosnian Serb soldier under Serb attack and Serb authorities have Tuesday shoots with an anti-aircraft cannon in the eastern enclave of Gorazde. Gorazde was even humanitarian aid into the region (see page 8) AFP photo.

Knesset to debate ban on torture

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

(Agencies) — Israel's parliament will debate Wednesday a bill by leftists to outlaw torture of Palestinian prisoners, a practice which human rights groups say is routine.

"We have to pass this legislation to prevent perversions of justice," said the bill's co-author, Haim Oron of the leftist Meretz faction. "We have all witnessed those perversions in the last years."

Israeli and Palestinian human rights groups say at least two Palestinians have died this year in interrogation wards of the Shin Bet secret police and at least four died last year.

Justice Minister David Libai of the ruling Labour Party said the government opposed the proposal because it defined torture too broadly.

"The clauses are too inclusive in a way that whenever it will cause emotional suffering or difficulty for the prisoner it will be possible to define the interrogation as torture," Mr. Libai told reporters Tuesday. "We said it seems to us difficult to support such broad definitions."

Mr. Libai has appointed his own committee to propose alternative legislation which he said would bring Israeli law in line with international conventions on torture.

The committee would revise recommendations of the 1987 Landau commission which investigated charges of police torture and then authorised use of "moderate physical pressure."

The Labour-led government is committed to new legislation to ban torture and Israel ratified the International Convention Against Torture in 1991, but nine left-wing parliamentarians fear nothing will be done and are

presenting their own proposals.

A two-day International Conference Against Torture heard allegations this week from human rights groups that torture of Palestinians is routine and systematic in Israeli jails.

A study of 477 ex-prisoners by the Gaza community mental health programme found nearly 96 per cent were tortured by beating, 93 per cent suffered extreme cold, 92 per cent were forced to stand for long periods, 94 per cent were threatened, 95 per cent verbally humiliated, and 77 per cent deprived of food.

Seventy per cent were forced to watch others being tortured, sometimes members of their own family, 66 per cent had pressure applied to their testicles.

Eleven per cent had instruments pushed into the penis or rectum, 13 per cent were exposed to irritant gas, and six per cent suffered electric shocks.

Israeli police say "moderate physical pressure" is used on suspects to obtain confessions. Palestinian "security prisoners" do not have to be presented in court for 19 days while Israelis are produced within 48 hours.

Under the proposals torturers would face up to 20 years in prison as would any public employee who is aware of torture and fails to report it. Evidence obtained under torture would be inadmissible.

According to Labour MP Yael Dayan, one of the private bill's sponsors, "certain types of torture have become the norm for Arab security suspects."

"But Jewish security suspects are not tortured. One out of every two security suspects tortured is set free and never charged, but no steps are taken against the torturer."

Economic forum wins high marks

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A three-day symposium on Jordan's economy ended Tuesday after an intensive examination of the Kingdom's economic problems and future prospects by prominent specialists from different countries.

The symposium's last session, which was mainly open to the audience to air their views and evaluations on the wide-ranging subjects which were tackled, was an opportunity for many attendees to call on the Centre for Strategic Studies of the University of Jordan to organise more economic forums similar to the one which just ended.

The audience, however, suggested that future forums have fewer topics, more time for presentation of papers and also additional time to engage the participants in discussions.

According to most attendees, the symposium was extremely successful in stirring economic thinking although the emphasis was more on the problems. They said the focus should have been on offering solutions or proposals for the future.

During the past three days, specialists examined the topics of indebtedness, banking, food security, water, animal wealth, unemployment, scientific research, development strategies, economic theory and implementation, tourism, investment, industry, transport, energy, higher education role in employment, privatisation, economic information and Jordan's economic relations with Arab and European countries.

One of the observations which were made Tuesday pointed to the weakness of statistics in Jordan as lecturers often gave contradictory figures on a certain subject with each of them citing different reliable sources.

Another observation was that Jordan's economic development and strategies throughout the previous decades were not governed by scientific or purely economic considerations but, rather, by political, social and security factors.

A lecturer, Jamal Tahat, from the Royal Scientific Society, Monday lauded the democratic atmosphere in the Kingdom and went on to blast the country's scientific institutions charging that their set-up and performance was all bureaucratic and in no way can be described as "truly productive."

He said that since the founding of the Kingdom Jordan's scientific institutions have only produced managers and ministers and not a single scientist.

Dr. Ghazi Al Sawa from the University of Jordan, strongly criticised the higher education system and affirmed that favouritism was widespread in admitting low-qualified students to the university, especially under royal scholarships.

He urged that higher education be restricted and that community colleges be transformed to institutions of applied sciences in order to provide the labour market with highly skillful workers.

Aideed supporters stage anti-U.N. rally

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — More than 1,000 supporters of warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed staged an anti-U.N. rally in Mogadishu on Tuesday as his enemy interim President Ali Mahdi Mohammad praised U.N. military action against the warlord.

The U.S. is pushing the United Nations to arrest General Aideed, blamed for the killings of 23 Pakistani peacekeepers, according to American officials here.

But U.N. spokesman Barrie Walkley stressed that Gen. Aideed "is free to move around" as no warrant had been issued for his arrest.

Gen. Aideed's supporters gathered at the July 1 Square to bear a stream of anti-U.N. invective from the warlord, who told them the U.N. was here to undermine stability and impose colonial rule on Somalia.

The rally ended peacefully, marking the least violent day since Saturday, when the U.N. launched a series of air strikes against Gen. Aideed's army depots that have weakened him militarily.

Similar demonstrations Saturday and Sunday ended in bloodshed, with at least 20 Somalis shot dead by Pakistani peacekeepers. The U.N. Security Council has

defended the Pakistanis, saying they opened fire because gunmen were trying to attack them using women and children pushed to the front of the demonstrators as human shields.

Intelligence officers with the U.N. forces here said the tactic had been used repeatedly by Gen. Aideed's militiamen who were driving around in cars with loudspeakers inciting people to riot.

"We are facing a particularly cunning and callous enemy who uses women and children as pawns," said Colonel Jim Campbell of the U.S. Reaction Force.

In related developments:

President Bill Clinton defended U.S. air raids in Somalia but called on the U.N. to make sure that the killing of Somali demonstrators by Pakistani troops is not repeated.

Mr. Clinton also said that there was some question about Sunday's shooting deaths.

"We expect the United Nations to take every possible step to ensure that U.N. peacekeepers do not cause injury or death to the people of Somalia," the president said.

Italian Defence Minister Fabio Fabbrì said that U.N. officials had assured him that they would take measures to avoid further loss of civilian lives.



Supporters of Somali warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed stage an anti-U.N. demonstration in Mogadishu Tuesday (AFP photo)

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Hashish, opium fields trashed in Lebanon's biggest crackdown

DIER AL AHMAR, Lebanon (R) — Hundreds of acres of Marijuana and opium fields in the Bekaa Valley, one of the world's major narcotics-growing regions, have been destroyed in the government's biggest crackdown on the drugs trade, the government said Tuesday.

The virtual destruction of Lebanon's narcotics trade, worth by conservative estimate around \$500 million a year and probably far more, should cut off a major source of drugs to Western Europe, the United States, Israel and the Arab World.

"All hashish and marijuana fields have been obliterated," Health Minister Marwan Hamadeh told the Associated Press.

"Today, Lebanon is reassured that law, justice and morality have come back to the nation," he said.

Destroying the narcotics trade "is very important to us because it changes Lebanon's image to the whole world," he stressed. "It indicates our country is recovering" from the 1975-90 civil war.

That marked a significant breakthrough for Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's Syrian-backed government in its drive to stamp out corruption and crime.

The fields, which produced around five tonnes of heroin and 700 to 800 tonnes of hashish a year, were plowed under by the growers themselves after the government gave them until dawn Tuesday to do so or face military action.

Security sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said earlier that by daybreak 90 per cent of the narcotics crop in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa in east Lebanon had been eradicated in the crackdown launched May 10.

More than 1,000 Lebanese troops and hundreds ofgendarmes backed by heavily armed Syrian forces were involved in the drive to smash narcotics rings and other smuggling operations that flourished during the civil war.

Reporters touring the narcotics centres around the ancient Roman city of Baalbek and the neighbouring Hermel and Deir Al Ahmar regions saw vast tracts of bulldozed marijuana and opium fields along 60 kilometres stretch of Lebanon's border with Syria Tuesday.

Marijuana is the base for hashish and heroin is made from opium poppies.

The security sources said they expected the remaining 10 per cent of the narcotics-growing region to be bulldozed by the growers by the end of the day.

Syrian and Lebanese troops patrolled the region.

"Any violator will be arrested and will be automatically destroyed his crop," said a senior police officer.

The sources said the Syrians have arrested more than 40 narcotics smugglers and hashish growers.

Eleven of the men were taken to Damascus, the Syrian capital, and executed, the sources said.

Sixteen illegal ports, used by smugglers since the war broke out, have been blown up in northern Lebanon and several makeshift bridges along contraband trails on both sides of the 400 kilometres Syrian border have been dynamited.

President Elias Hrawi's administration began cracking down on crime after Lebanon signed a treaty of brotherhood, cooperation and coordination with Syria, the undisputed master in Lebanon, in September 1991.

But the current drive is the most sustained and wide-ranging to eradicate the anarchy of the civil war years.

Since Mr. Hariri took office last October, he has stepped up these efforts as part of his campaign to attract foreign aid and investment to help post-war reconstruction.

Damascus is under strong pressure from the United States and its allies to curb drug trafficking and break its links with extremist groups based on Syria territory if it wants badly needed economic aid.

U.S. officials have long claimed the Bekaa drug barons were linked to, and protected by, senior Syrian and Lebanese officials.

During the war, militias were heavily involved in the narcotics trade, using the profits to buy weapons and power.

The trade has long been a mainstay of the Lebanese economy. The pinch will be felt primarily by the hundreds of small marijuana growers who sold their crops to the Bekaa drug barons.

As the narcotics trade mushroomed during the war, farmers switched from growing wheat and potatoes to the more profitable marijuana and opium.

Antoine Fakhr, a 43-year-old grower in Beddide, a Maronite Catholic village near Deir Al Ahmar, said he often earned \$20,000 a day from one 10-hectare poppy field.

At least 18 years old and pay \$70 in membership fees. After a month-long inquiry, the company says a credit limit and payments must be reimbursed 30 days later.

The company takes a commission of between one and five per cent.

Few Palestinians merchants would accept the credit cards for the same reasons.

"In the beginning, we had some difficulties because many Palestinians had never used a credit card and thought that we were a lending institution," he added.

Mr. Zayat, one of the main lawyers who has defended militants tried in military courts for a campaign of violence to overthrow the Egyptian government, said he had been granted a U.S. visa and hoped to leave Saturday after being cleared to go by security authorities.

The trade centre blast killed six people and wounded more than 1,000.

Mr. Abouhalima, 33, was arrested on March 14 in Alexandria in Egypt. Authorities believe he was the mastermind of the bombing at the twin towers in Manhattan.

Mr. Elmaghrabi, 42, is accused of obstructing justice by fighting with U.S. agents investigating the attack. Prosecutors said he was suspected of involvement in the bombing but he has not been charged in connection with that.

Mr. Zayat said investigations had not produced any evidence implicating Mr. Elmaghrabi. He said the U.S. security authorities had tried to recruit Mr. Abouhalima to get information on Muslim militant activity but Mr. Abouhalima refused.

Four other men of Arab origin have been indicted on charges of involvement in the blast.

Three are under arrest: Mohammad Salameh, 25, Nidal Ayyad, 25, and Bilal Alkai, 27. Ramzi Yousef, 25, was charged in his absence.

Mr. Zayat said he would brief Sheikh Abdul Rahman on the three hearings held so far in his retrial, which began in April at a state security court Fayoum, 90 kilometres southwest of Cairo.

He said the Egyptian authorities had not issued Sheikh Abdul Rahman a formal summons to attend the retrial. Even if they did, the preacher would not attend, Mr. Zayat said.

More than 130 people have been killed in a surge of political violence in Egypt over the past 14 months.

The statement denied a report broadcast by the Christian-controlled Voice of Lebanon radio station that the gunmen attempted to kidnap Mr. Clark and that they stole his briefcase when the attempt failed.

Police had no further information about Mr. Clark's whereabouts or the name of the construction firm he represents. He has been staying in a furnished apartment in Beirut since his arrival.

Due to a sharp economic crisis gripping Lebanon, armed robberies have been frequent in Beirut despite the lapse of more than two years since the end of the country's 1975-90 civil war and an anti-crime drive by the government.

The police statement was emphatic in denying the motive of abduction behind the attack on Mr. Clark, apparently to reassure foreigners that the hostage-taking spree of the past decade has not been resurrected.

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's government has been trying to reestablish law and order after the civil war militia anarchy that turned Lebanon into a haven of assassins, air pirates, hostage takers and suicide bombers.

Mr. Hariri's anti-crime drive is aimed at restoring confidence in Lebanon to attract foreign aid for a \$4.4 billion plan to reconstruct downtown Beirut's commercial district, the onetime financial nerve centre of the Middle East.

At least 92 foreigners were kidnapped and held hostage by pro-Iranian factions between 1984 and 1991. The longest-held was Terry Anderson, the former chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press. He was freed Dec. 4, 1991.

Jerusalem Express credit card launched

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A "homesick" businessman who returned here from the United States has launched the first Palestinian credit card, Jerusalem Express, which features a photograph of the Holy City.

"The card's goal is to improve the Palestinian economy and to allow Palestinian money to stay in Palestinian hands," said the card's founder, 34-year-old Jalal Al Hindi.

Mr. Hindi returned to his native Jerusalem with his family in October after working 25 years for American Express in both Akron, Ohio, and Miami.

"I was homesick," he said. "I already had the experience and I got the idea when I came back here," said Mr. Hindi, an American of Palestinian origin.

It took him five months before Israeli officials approved the venture in May and the cards went into use this week.

His Jerusalem National Express Company had 10,000 printed in the United States, and more than 200 stores in East Jerusalem honour them.

There are also plans to distribute the card in the West Bank cities of Nablus, Ramallah, and Hebron as well as in the Gaza Strip.

"We want to be present in the entire occupied territories, then distribute it in Arab countries and even in the rest of the world," he said.

Inhabitants of the Israeli-occupied territories previously could obtain credit cards if they deposited money in Israeli banks but few so far fear their deposits would be seized by tax authorities.

Few Palestinians merchants would accept the credit cards for the same reasons.

"In the beginning, we had some difficulties because many Palestinians had never used a credit card and thought that we were a lending institution," he added.

Mr. Zayat, one of the main lawyers who has defended militants tried in military courts for a campaign of violence to overthrow the Egyptian government, said he had been granted a U.S. visa and hoped to leave Saturday after being cleared to go by security authorities.

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100 die in Afghan mudslide

KABUL (AFP) — Some 100 people were killed and more were missing feared dead after a mudslide triggered by freak rains swept away some 250 houses in Kabul, city Mayor Fazi Kareem Aimaq said Tuesday.

Armed groups took the opportunity to fire on the capital with machine-guns and rockets under cover of the thunderstorm that caused the disaster late Monday, local residents said.

An entire family of 11 was wiped out after being trapped by the flash-flood of mud in their basement where they had sheltered for protection from the rocket barrage.

"There will be emergency assistance to families of 10,000 afghanis (\$10) for every martyr," said Mr. Fazi Kareem, who personally tramped through the mud to inspect the disaster area.

The mayor, whose personnel were working with local security

troops to clear the area, said his office would also issue a bread ration three times a day to the homeless, and a commission would meet soon to assess the total damage.

The worst-affected were those of the old city where houses are built up the steep slopes of the adjacent Sherdawa mountain peak.

One resident, Abdul Mohammad, said his four-year-old daughter was killed in the mudslide and two other daughters were still buried. Two sons were pulled out of the mud after being trapped for an hour and he only had one room left of his 13-room two-storey house.

Abdul Mohammad described the sudden intense storm as "the worst in memory." He said no one else had the time to help him dig for his two missing daughters.

Local people said the unofficial death count of 100 at noon Tuesday would rise as rescue workers and families cleared away all the mud, which was up to two metres deep in some houses.

Some of the damage was caused by large boulders washed down from the mountain-top, which sliced through houses leaving parts of private living quarters exposed like external verandas.

Roofing beams blocked all footpaths, some with the twisted remains of ceiling fans still attached, with furniture, kitchen utensils and rugs scattered down the mountain slope like confetti on the ground.

The force of the moving mud was so great that five large shipping containers used for storage, one with a car inside, were swept off their foundations and shifted some 15 metres down the hill until they became wedged in a natural stream bed next to the local cemetery.

They said Michael Clark, 56, an engineer who has been in Beirut for about a month, was accused as he climbed into his car in Beirut's seaside residential district of Raouche to drive to his company's office at 6:45 a.m. (0345 GMT).

One assailant pointed a pistol equipped with a silencer to Mr. Clark's head while another wrestled his leather briefcase, which contained the money, his passport, a checkbook and other credentials, according to the police statement.

It said the robbers took Mr. Clark's car keys, apparently to prevent him from chasing them. The keys were later found on a sidewalk about 200 metres from the holdup.

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OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A "homesick" businessman who returned here from the United States has launched the first Palestinian credit card, Jerusalem Express, which features a photograph of the Holy City.

"The card's goal is to improve the Palestinian economy and to allow Palestinian money to stay in Palestinian hands," said the card's founder, 34-year-old Jalal Al Hindi.

Mr. Hindi returned to his native Jerusalem with his family in October after working 25 years for American Express in both Akron, Ohio, and Miami.

"I was homesick," he said. "I already had the experience and I got the idea when I came back here," said Mr. Hindi, an American of Palestinian origin.

It took him five months before Israeli officials approved the venture in May and the cards went into use this week.

His Jerusalem National Express Company had 10,000 printed in the United States, and more than 200 stores in East Jerusalem honour them.

There are also plans to distribute the card in the West Bank cities of Nablus, Ramallah, and Hebron as well as in the Gaza Strip.

"We want to be present in the entire occupied territories, then distribute it in Arab countries and even in the rest of the world," he said.

Inhabitants of the Israeli-occupied territories previously could obtain credit cards if they deposited money in Israeli banks but few so far fear their deposits would be seized by tax authorities.

Few Palestinians merchants would accept the credit cards for the same reasons.

"In the beginning, we had some difficulties because many Palestinians had never used a credit card and thought that we were a lending institution," he added.

Mr. Zayat, one of the main lawyers who has defended militants tried in military courts for a campaign of violence to overthrow the Egyptian government, said he had been granted a U.S. visa and hoped to leave Saturday after being cleared to go by security authorities.

The trade centre blast killed six people and wounded more than 1,000.

Mr. Abouhalima, 33, was arrested on March 14 in Alexandria in Egypt. Authorities believe he was the mastermind of the bombing at the twin towers in Manhattan.

Mr. Elmaghrabi, 42, is accused of obstructing justice by fighting with U.S. agents investigating the attack. Prosecutors said he was suspected of involvement in the bombing but he has not been charged in connection with that.

Mr. Zayat said investigations had not produced any evidence implicating Mr. Elmaghrabi. He said the U.S. security authorities had tried to recruit Mr. Abouhalima to get information on Muslim militant activity but Mr. Abouhalima refused.

Four other men of Arab origin have been indicted on charges of involvement in the blast.

Three are under arrest: Mohammad Salameh, 25, Nidal Ayyad, 25, and Bilal Alkai, 27. Ramzi Yousef, 25, was charged in his absence.

Mr. Zayat said he would brief Sheikh Abdul Rahman on the three hearings held so far in his retrial, which began in April at a state security court Fayoum, 90 kilometres southwest of Cairo.

He said the Egyptian authorities had not issued Sheikh Abdul Rahman a formal summons to attend the retrial. Even if they did, the preacher would not attend, Mr. Zayat said.

More than 130 people have been killed in a surge of political violence in Egypt over the past 14 months.

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Crown Prince meets with world human rights activists

VIENNA (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday met in Vienna with Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky and discussed with him scope of cooperation between Jordan and Austria.

The chancellor commended Prince Hassan's participation in the World Conference on Human Rights which opened in Vienna Monday and underscored the importance of the Crown Prince's speech at the opening ceremony.

In his address Monday, Prince Hassan called on the international community to affirm the indivisibility of human rights, saying civil and political rights should go

hand in hand with economic, social and cultural rights. (See full text of the Crown Prince's speech, P. 4)

Earlier, Prince Hassan received at his residence in the Austrian capital U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali who thanked the Prince for his participation in the conference.

The Crown Prince also received former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, the Yemeni foreign minister, the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at the conference and the Austrian foreign minister.

He also met with representa-

tives of non-governmental organisations participating in the conference. Jordan's delegation headed by Sharif Fawaz Sharaf, the Mauritanian prime minister and the Moroccan minister of culture.

Discussions at the meetings centred on issues of common interest and the current world conference.

Prince Hassan Tuesday returned home from Vienna and was received at the airport by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal several royal family members, Acting Prime Minister Maan Abu Nuwar, and senior officials.

Shipping line to buy 15,000 tonne vessel

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan National Shipping Line (JNSL) plans to purchase a 1980-built 15,000 tonne cargo vessel from Italy to help speed up exports of Jordanian phosphate in bulk to India, according to JNSL Director General Yasser Tall.

Mr. Tall told the Jordan Times Wednesday that the JNSL board has approved the purchase of the Italian ship, to be called "Al Hassa," at a cost of \$4 million.

The vessel can boost the transportation of phosphate, mined in the south of the country, to India and bring back goods from other countries to Jordan, said Mr. Tall.

Immediately upon its expected arrival in the harbour at Aqaba in July the vessel will be turned over to the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) which is chartering it to export phosphate in bulk, he said.

India is the main importer of Jordanian phosphate, buying \$150 million worth of the mineral annually.

Noting that the JNSL plans to purchase more cargo vessels in the future for exports of Jordanian phosphate as well as other products, Mr. Tall said the JNSL is self-financing its ship purchases and its operations.

"Now we own three cargo vessels, but we charter several others from time to time to help ensure the flow of phosphate to imports, especially in Asia, and to meet the JPMC commitments to the other countries," noted Mr. Tall.

He said the JNSL is in need of more vessels to make up for the reduction of the number of cargo vessels coming to Aqaba recently as a result of the "harassment and shipping inspection operations and delays in the delivery of goods."

Mr. Tall was referring to the U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq which have resulted in inspections by U.S. naval enforcers and the diversion of many cargo vessels from their Aqaba destination.

One of the three JNSL-owned vessels is an oil tanker stationed permanently at the port of Aqaba and holding crude oil in reserve.

House denounces death sentence passed on Jordanians by Kuwait

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Tuesday issued a statement, denouncing the death sentences passed by a Kuwaiti court last week against 10 Jordanian citizens and appealed to world organisations and human rights groups to interfere and block the execution of these citizens and secure their release.

"It is sad to hear such court decisions being passed against Arab citizens, particularly Jordanians and Palestinians, because they are innocent people who had served the emirate faithfully for many years," said the parliament statement.

The verdict lacks validity and does not hinge on legal grounds, but rather violates all norms and human rights principles, it added.

Several of those sentenced to death are students who could not have had anything to do with the alleged conspiracy with the Iraqis, continued the statement.

"The House appeals to world organisations to use their good offices to secure the release of

these innocent citizens and other Jordanians who are detained for no reason except that they were in Kuwait during the Gulf crisis," said the statement.

It said these citizens have been cooperating closely with the Kuwaiti citizens, serving the emirate loyally and have never conspired against the state.

The statement was sent to the Arab Parliamentary Union, the International Parliamentary Union, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (meeting this week), the secretary-general of the United Nations and the Arab League secretary general, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the human rights organisations.

According to a statement by the president of the bar association Monday, four Jordanian detainees have died under torture in Kuwaiti jails, and 78 other remained jailed without trial in Kuwaiti prisons.

Speaker of the Upper House of

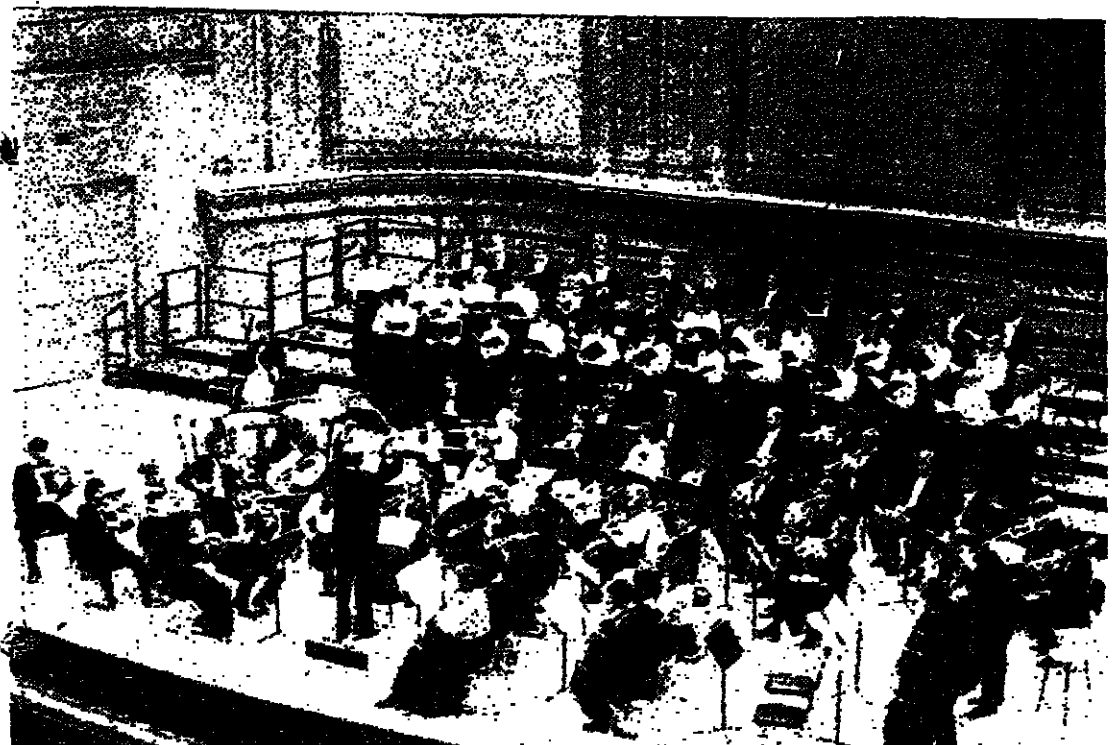
Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi earlier sent cables to the chairman of the Arab Parliamentary Union, Abdul Qader Qaddoura, and Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid, calling on them to pressure the Kuwaiti government into releasing the 10 Jordanian citizens.

Pardoning these accused men would no doubt help safeguard the Arab nation's image before the world, and would enhance the principle of human rights and the cause of justice, said Mr. Lawzi in his cables.

Pardons will no doubt reflect positively on Kuwait and its reputation and lead to further steps aimed at healing rifts among Arab countries, he added.

Mr. Lawzi also received in his office a delegation representing the Tasmeh tribes of the West Bank.

Several members of the tribe are among those sentenced to death in Kuwait. He said Jordan was doing all it can to block the executions.



New England Youth Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in New York

A promise to delight listeners

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — If piano recitals are great, concerts with a full-size symphony orchestra are even greater, at least for music lovers in Jordan, who are often treated to solo instrument recitals rather than such orchestral performances.

Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor and presented by the National Music Conservatory-Noor Al Hussein Foundation and the American Centre in Amman, in cooperation with Speaking Professionally and Rawdat Al Maaref Schools, the New English Youth Orchestra and Choir will give two major concerts in the country.

The first will be on Thursday June 17, at Al Hassan Bin Talal Auditorium at the University of Jordan; the second on Saturday June 19, at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Seventy musicians, forming the American ensemble promise to delight their listeners with beautiful classical music.

Composed mainly of young artists, with an average age of 17, the orchestra was established by conductor and composer Virginia Gene-Rittenhouse. Motivated by spiritual values that they want to communicate through their music, the ensemble's members seem to follow Bach's saying that music should be "to the glory of God and the refreshment of the spirit."

Young, but with an already impressive experience, the youth orchestra has performed in many countries and major venues from the United States, China and the Russian Federation.

Several of its members are first prize winners of international music competitions. Countless radio engagement and TV appearances have won them

unanimous recognition.

One element contributing to their success is certainly their choice of pleasant programmes.

Sampling one of their live recordings one can listen to Handel's Overture to the Royal Fireworks, Vivaldi's Winter from the Four Seasons, Rossini's Overture to William Tell, and Bizet's Toreador from Carmen.

The appeal does not only come from their tasteful choice of the music, but also from their talented and joyful interpretation of it.

The selection they have made for Amman's concerts include Handel, Vivaldi, Beethoven, Prokofiev and Mozart, to name only a few.

After a season rich in quality concerts, the National Music Conservatory is confirming its successful efforts to promote great music in Jordan, in all its forms and to all ages.

Syria releases Jordanian

AMMAN (R) — Syria has freed a second Jordanian Baath Party leader jailed after President Hafez Al Assad seized power in 1970, his family said Tuesday.

Mjall Nasraween, released in Syria sometime this week, was expected to arrive in Jordan Wednesday to welcome celebrations at his southern hometown of Smakiya.

"Mjall called us yesterday from Syria saying he is happy and good spirits and will come to us on Wednesday," his cousin Bulos Nasraween told Reuters.

Mr. Nasraween, a 59-year-old bachelor, comes from a well-known Christian family.

A member of the Syrian Baath Arab Socialist Party's regional

command, he was among Syrian, Jordanian and Iraqi party officials jailed by Syria on July 14, 1971. It was not immediately clear whether Syria, under Western pressure to improve its human rights record and free political prisoners, released other captives.

In January it released the first batch of jailed Baath leaders, including Jordanian Hakem Al Fayez. Amnesty International, the London-based human rights group, says thousands of people have been imprisoned without trial in Syria under emergency legislation dating back to 1963. Syria denies that it jails activists for their political beliefs.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent visits PSD, congratulates Iran

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein, the Regent, Tuesday called at the Public Security Department where he met with PSD Director Major General Abdul Rahman Al Udwan. Prince Faisal was accompanied by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid. Prince Faisal also sent a cable to Iranian President Hashmi Rafsanjani, congratulating him on his re-election. Prince Faisal wished Mr. Rafsanjani continued good health and happiness and the Iranian people further progress and prosperity. Also Tuesday, Prince Faisal sent a cable to the President of Iceland congratulating him on his country's national day and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the Icelandic people further progress and prosperity.

Sharifa Zein discusses volunteer projects in Tafleeh

TAFILEH (Petra) — Sharifah Zein Bint Naser Tuesday discussed with Tafleeh Governor Mohammad Al Tahouni voluntary projects to be carried out in the governorate by volunteers from Al Sablah Project. Sharifah Zein said Al Sablah project is part of the Crown Prince Awards programme designed to enhance youth participation in voluntary projects and to use their innovative capacities in developing local communities. Al Sablah also encourages scientific research, adventure and voluntary work throughout the country. She pointed out that Al Sablah projects this year will be restricted to Mafraq, Karak, Maan and Tafleeh governorates.

Youth, sports meetings open

AMMAN (Petra) — Youth Minister Abdullah Oweidat Tuesday opened meetings of the Arab committee assisting the Council of Arab Ministers of Youth and Sports.

Dr. Oweidat welcomed participants and voiced Jordan's interest in unifying Arab folds and ensuring Arab solidarity. Dr. Oweidat stressed the important role youth can play in serving and developing societies. Taking part in the committee's meetings are sports experts from Syria, Morocco, Qatar, Egypt, Bahrain and Jordan.

Cabinet endorses 11 economic projects

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Tuesday endorsed the recommendations made by a special committee on encouragement of investments in Jordan. The committee endorsed 11 new projects as certified economic projects and recommended their official endorsement by the government. The cabinet, meeting under the chairmanship of Acting Prime Minister and Information Minister Maan Abu Nuwar, approved a draft agreement concluded between Jordan and the Arab Union for Food Industries, under which the union's headquarters will be based in Amman. The Jordanian government will accord the union's offices all the privileges and immunities offered to similar organisations and offices. The union is an Arab League affiliate.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by artists Nawal Abdullah Katian and Dodi Tabbea at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Japanese paintings and photos at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Salem Al Dabbagh, Himat Ali and Karim Rasan at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m.-8 p.m.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, entitled "The Primary Features of the Political Map in Jordan on the Eve of the Legislative Elections" by Hani Al Hourani at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6.30 p.m.

FILM

- ★ Feature film entitled "Billie the Spirit" at 7 p.m. at the British Council.

Occupational therapy college to graduate 15 students

AMMAN (J.T.) — A group of 15 trainees Wednesday will graduate from the Occupational Therapy College at the King Hussein Medical Centre under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor. Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd

Ben Zeid is to deputise for the Queen at the graduation ceremony.

Established in 1989, the occupational therapy college is a joint venture undertaken by the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) and the King Hussein Medical Centre.

Occupational therapy is the treatment of physical and psychiatric conditions through specific, selected activities designed to help patients attain a maximum level of function and independence in all aspects of daily life, following illness, injury or surgery according to a college statement.

Tourism recovers, says Hikmat

AMMAN (R) — Jordan Tuesday said its tourism industry has recovered from the Gulf crisis and the number of visitors from Europe and the United States last year was close to record levels.

"Tourism in Jordan has pulled out of the effects of the crisis," Tourism Minister Yasser Hikmat told Reuters.

Mr. Hikmat said around 161,000 European and American tourists visited Jordan in 1992, compared to 175,000 in 1989, the year before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

He said tourists added between 80 million dinars to 100 million dinars to Jordan's economy in 1992. Making the industry one of the debt-hit Kingdom's top foreign exchange earners.

The number of tourists in the first three months of 1993 increased by more than eight per cent compared to the same period last year, Mr. Hikmat said, and the upward trend was continuing.

Most of the European visitors — from Spain, Germany and Italy — are attracted by Jordan's key ancient treasures like the Nabatean-carved red city of Petra, the Greco-Roman city of Jerash and a dozen decades-old desert castles.

Most Americans visit Jordan as part of a "holy land" package tour that also takes them to the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Mr. Hikmat said Jordan was trying to tap into the Japanese, Scandinavian and Swiss markets.

Greece, Jordan to try to balance trade exchange

AMMAN (Petra) — Topping the agenda of trade and economic talks between Jordan and Greece Wednesday is the adjustment of the balance of trade between the countries, said Haidar Murad, deputy chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce.

In a statement Tuesday, Mr.

Murad said the balance is currently in favour of Greece, adding that Greece sells Jordan nearly \$24 million worth of products and buys \$4 million worth of Jordanian goods.

The balance could be adjusted through more exports to Greece and through joint ventures.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
جوردان تايمز صحيفة سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

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Jordan Press Foundation,
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Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

New hope for Vienna

THE WORLD conference on human rights may not be heading to a disaster after all judging by the atmosphere that dominated the beginning of the deliberations in Vienna. It appears that the various regional groupings which formulated their respective positions in the pre-conference meetings were more interested in jockeying for bargaining posture vis-a-vis one another than submitting their final say on their human rights perspectives.

According to reports reaching us from Vienna, there are still four shades of stances on human rights ranging from the Western countries on one extreme and the Asian group on the other. Sandwiched between are the African and Latin American states with the Africans closer to the Asians and the Latin Americans closer to the Western alliance on human rights.

Till this point in time there appears to be no distinct Arab position on the agenda of the Vienna conference. Instead the Islamic nations are busy formulating their own peculiar interpretation of human rights with a strong accent on their particular cultural and religious heritage as a factor that they view as an excuse to apply on them less rigidly the already adopted norms and standards on human rights. In his statement to the conferees Monday, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan referred to the different cultural and religious heritages of nations and called upon such diversity to enrich mankind's attitude towards human rights endeavours rather than serve as a pretext to violate basic human rights, which he described as universally applicable. On this note, there seems to be a consensus emerging and the participants in the Vienna meeting that fundamental human rights must be universally applicable. The right to development, a point repeatedly mentioned by various speakers, is now accepted as a legitimate goal that is on par with other dimensions of human rights. Here again Prince Hassan's message was loud and clear when he said that the world needs a multi-disciplinary approach to human rights pursuits including the right to development as also a basic objective that would complement the pursuit of the other dimensions. But under no circumstance should this be exploited to justify violations of basic human rights in other fields.

Although it is much too early to judge which way the conference is heading, a sense of optimism is slowly replacing the initial pessimism that nothing much will emerge from the Vienna meeting. If the different groups of nations are indeed committed to their current positions for only bargaining strategies, then all cannot be lost at the end of the day. At least we all hope so.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

SAWT AL SHAAB Arabic daily Tuesday called for immediate intervention by the United States to ensure a successful ending to the 10th round of Arab-Israeli talks in Washington. Yitzhak Rabin has been issuing statements to the effect that Israel does not contemplate full withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and does not want to give any concession to the Palestinians, said the paper. In light of such statements, the Arab parties to the 10th round have the right to be apprehensive about the outcome of the negotiations which are starting today and await a genuine and meaningful effort on the part of the United States to ensure Israel's compliance with the requirements of peace, said the daily. There is no doubt, the paper said, that the King's visit to the United States this week and his talks with the American president would give impetus to the talks. But on the whole, said the paper, there can be no going back from the path of peace which should be approached with a united Arab front and a clear pursuit of the rights of the Palestinian and other Arab parties, added the paper.

SULTAN AL HATTAB, a columnist in AJ Ra'i daily, voiced anger and disgust at the death sentences passed on the Palestinian, Jordanian citizens living in Kuwait and at those passed on Algerians and Egyptians in their own countries. All those who have been sentenced to death are Arab citizens and not foreign invaders of Arab land and therefore should be treated at least with mercy and given prison sentences, nothing more, demanded the writer. He said he does not support violent actions like those the Egyptians and the Algerian Islamists have resorted to in their fight against their respective regimes, but he does not approve of death sentences either, because such sentences, he said, should be considered as violating human rights. For sure, the Kuwaitis are violating human rights principles by summarily sentencing to death ordinary citizens who were never proved to have helped the Iraqis invade Kuwait, the writer continued. There is a great deal of injustice and human rights violations going on in the Arab World nowadays simply because the ruling regimes do not tolerate any opposition or criticism of their rule, he said. We in Arab countries, but we also do not condone violence and oppose the use of force in toppling regimes, the writer continued.

Economic Forum

New government's dilemma

To tax or not to tax?

So far, the government has been lucky enough to start "business" with a tax hike without inviting a popular outcry. Actually, the first decisions the government made were those related to this hike. Now, this is not only luck but also courage.

The hike under question refers to the broadening of the base of the consumption tax and the rise in the electricity tariff as well as in the price of fuel oil and kerosene. To be fair, the economic crew in the new government made their best to convince the IMF delegation to discard the tax increase, but that attempt did not work. The IMF people had arrived in Amman when the new government was formed and the negotiations took place over the holiday of the Feast of Sacrifice. The IMF people even turned down a proposal to compress public expenditures by an amount equivalent to the proceeds of the required tax increase. But the Jordanians seemed to have successfully resisted a demand for raising the water tariff, at least for the time being.

The general sales tax was shelved, but that is a formality without substance. The question is to levy or not to levy new taxes. Whether the new taxes are called sales tax, consumption tax or whatever, is completely immaterial.

To soften the impact of the new taxes on consumers, the official view went to say that the increase in the electricity tariff would affect only those who consume more than 300 kw per month. This is an empty argument. Consumers that buy more than that amount are commonly the industrial, agricultural and commercial businesses which turn out the goods and services bought by the consumers. These will surely pass the cost increase consequent on the higher tariff to the consumers as they do not allow it to erode their profit margins. Similarly, the consumer will end up paying the additional consumption tax and, of course, the extra costs of fuel oil.

From now and until 1998, the end of the present adjustment programme, the government will have to keep on increasing taxes and fees as to meet the fiscal targets decreed in that programme. The government cannot break away with this programme even if it finds that it is necessary to do so, simply because it does not have the foreign exchange needed to pay the external loans which mature every now and then and which will, under the programme, be successively rescheduled. As Jordan will not suddenly have the necessary funds in 1999, a new adjustment programme will have

to be launched, as was the case in Egypt.

So far, we have tried to evade the thorny problem of high costs of living which is being aggravated by the ever-increasing taxes, by talking about the rate of inflation. This rate measures the annual change in the index of costs of living. It thus may subside, as it did in 1991, and even may grind down to zero, without meaning that the problem of high cost of living has disappeared. To really harness this socio-economic problem, the costs of living should decline. This is a very remote possibility in practical terms. Prices may drop in a given year but they rarely do that on any sustainable basis. The other means to counter high costs of living is to boost real per capita incomes, which is the crux of economic development challenge.

The historical evidence shows clearly that the era of inflation was the painful direct outcome of the devaluation of the Jordanian dinar. As the vicious effects of that devaluation faded away, rates of inflation tend to slow down. It is not that these rates are intolerable, but their association with unemployment has made them destructive. The policy of more and more taxes is aggravating an already harsh situation.

'We can, we must, we will commit ourselves to building a truly global ethic of respect for human rights and dignity'

Following is His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's address at the World Conference on Human Rights that opened in Vienna on June 14, 1993.

WE HAVE gathered at the World Conference on Human Rights to strengthen our individual and collective efforts to ensure respect for the human rights and dignity of every child, woman and man. In this task we represent those who are not here with us, those millions who are tortured by starvation, or imprisoned behind the bars of prejudice and discrimination, and those facing death, physical abuse or incarceration for their beliefs. We speak not only for ourselves, but also for the voiceless still denied their right to self-determination, or suffering the abuse of prolonged foreign occupation. We act on behalf of the one quarter of our human family forced to live in poverty and deprivation, as well as of the oppressed and those forced to flee their homelands, seeking refuge and international protection, but all too often finding asylum a mirage beyond their reach. We speak also for those yet to come: We are responsible for the future that awaits our children and humanity as a whole. Abuses of human rights offend the dignity not only of the victims, but of us all. We are members of one family — humanity — sharing our one Earth in common. At great cost we have learned the importance of caring for the Earth. We must also learn to care for those who live upon it.

It is our duty to ensure that this meeting goes beyond mere rhetoric and inspires an active commitment to universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. The differences in our political ideologies and in the economic models we have adopted have sometimes impeded consensus amongst us. But we are not here to talk about politics, but about rights; not about economic theories, but about justice and equitable access to available resources.

In this we have the benefit of the diversity of our faiths and cultures which will act as a rich resource in our search for a consensus based on our common humanity. President Mary Robinson has recently called for a listening approach to human rights. We must heed her words here in our deliberations and listen to each other and be respectful of each other's points of view, mindful that in our various traditions the approaches we adopt in the process of consensus building might themselves differ.

This task of consensus building is critical. In these transitional post-cold war times, we need a joint commitment to meet the challenges of an emerging world order. Human rights represent a touchstone, a yardstick by which the success of our endeavours can be judged. Our aim should not be simply to reach a compromise between differing or conflicting views; but to find a common vision, a framework for global action, a consensus for the future of humankind.

As a first step we need to reconfirm those fundamental principles on which human rights are based, the universality of human rights and the indivisibility of all rights. From this base we can develop a truly global ethic for regulating, not only the relationship between states and their peoples, but also the manner in which individuals and communities treat one another.

A global consensus on human rights must affirm their universality. Human rights are universal in that they are possessed by all members of the human family, regardless of differences of gender, race, religion, politics or any other distinguishing characteristics. These rights form a core minimum standard binding on all states.

Some recent criticisms of the principle of universality of human rights provided the impetus for a satellite meeting in preparation for this conference which was held in Amman in April 1993 under the auspices of the International Movement of Rights and Humanity. This discussion brought together representatives of the world's main faiths, and people from all regions of the world. A consensus emerged from the meeting calling for the reaffirmation of the vital importance of the principle of universality, by which all states must respect and protect the internationally recognised human rights, whatever the level of the states' economic or political development. We should take the opportunity of this world conference to reconfirm this vital principle.

However, as U.N. Assistant Secretary General Ibrahim Fall reminded us at the Amman meeting, the international "standards provide great flexibility in national adaptation and do not impose any specific political, legal, social or cultural model." Thus the values of each society may shape the policies and measures which a state adopts in order to implement its international obligations.

It is in this context that Jordan envisages regional human rights instruments playing an important role. They can complement and strengthen the global norms, by developing additional rules and norms for the implementation of human rights in the region. It is our hope that the world conference will provide an impetus for the adoption of a regional human rights charter in our part of the world, drawing on the richness of our philosophies and the values of our faiths and cultures. Similarly, the contributions of different approaches may strengthen the drafting of future global instruments.

International monitoring of the established standards touches on the sensitive issue of the nature of state sovereignty. But we must never lose sight of the fact that sovereignty does not give licence to brutalise, to disempower, to deny human dignity. There is no sovereign right to torture and maim, or to condemn individuals or whole peoples to poverty through the abuse and manipulation of political or economic power.

Human rights issues are the legitimate concern of the international community under the U.N. Charter. All states therefore have a responsibility — and indeed an interest — to promote universal respect for human rights. But if human rights criteria are to be the foundation of justice in the world, their monitoring should be seen to be objective. Accountability must be based on internationally recognised legal norms, and not on a particular state's subjective value judgement. For selective condemnation serves only to perpetuate conflict and hamper potential reconciliation.

We have a unique opportunity at this conference to reconfirm the indivisibility of all rights and to commit ourselves to strengthening the implementation not only of civil and political rights but also of economic, social and cultural rights. It was Leopold Senghor who reminded us that "human rights begin with breakfast," yet starvation is widespread. We are witness to the growing number of our children forced to eke out a precarious existence on city streets; the suffering of people evicted from their homes to swell the homelessness that shames our societies; the indigenous peoples of our world denied their cultural heritage; and the growing impoverishment of women, children and other vulnerable groups. Our indifference and failure to take strong and effective action to prevent and address these violations, is in my view itself a form of abuse — one for which we all share responsibility.

As far as cultural rights are concerned, I trust that the rich culture of this beautiful city of Vienna, host to our conference, will inspire us to give special emphasis to developing the protection and implementation of these rights, and to strengthen the relationship of cultural rights to human development and democracy. A society which prevents free cultural expression or excludes participation in cultural life by any part of its people is an impoverished society, and one that is unlikely to practice tolerance and other attitudes fundamental to human rights.

Since the 1968 World Conference in Tehran, we have done much to identify the issues of concern. Considerable progress has been made in strengthening the protection of human rights by the adoption of specific international legal instruments. Our task at this conference is surely to

consider how to bridge the divide between the aspirations of these legal texts, and the realities of people's lives. For despite our achievements, many categories of human rights violations have yet to be eliminated.

We need to move on from the mere iteration of human rights — right relationship between states and their peoples, and mutual respect among individuals. This requires a pro-active approach focused on effective strategies for the prevention of violations, including the promotion of a human rights framework for policy-making, education in human rights and responsibilities, and the empowerment of individuals and peoples so that they live in dignity, protected by their rights.

We need to adopt a holistic approach which can embrace the interdependence of all human beings and the indivisibility of all human rights; and which can address social inequalities and environmental concerns, both national and international, in the idiom of human rights. This means protecting and respecting not only civil and political rights, but also the economic, social and cultural rights that are their practical foundations.

We need more public awareness programmes, backed up at the international level by the ratification of treaties and the commitment of resources. But is this sufficient? It seems that we need something more profound — a shift in our thinking so that humanity, rather than economic considerations, can be central to our goals both as governments and as individuals.

Such an ethic is essential if we wish to deal effectively with the myriad of new challenges facing us. We need think only of the increasingly apparent human dimensions of the environmental crisis; the sore testing of our compassion and humanity by the widening AIDS pandemic; the growing technological and economic divide between North and South; or the difficulties of containing religious intolerance which threatens the mutual understanding so critically needed in our increasingly multi-racial and multi-cultural societies.

The human spirit is under siege, our instinct of neighbourly love threatened by the onslaught of hatred, intolerance, greed and cynicism. The world cries out for inspiration, but is floundering in its search for guidance, for a way forward.

Can human rights values provide that light to guide us? Can the candle of hope rekindle our human solidarity and love? Can we build a truly global ethic of respect for human rights and dignity which shapes not only international action, and that of governments, but also our own actions as individuals? How can we move beyond the paucity of spirit caused by excessive materialism?

In the words of the Arab poet AlMutanabi:

"He who squanders his days collecting money,
For fear of poverty,
Poverty is what he bus

attained."

This view has been echoed recently by Nobel peace laureate and prisoner of conscience Aung San Suu Kyi who writes "material yardsticks alone cannot serve as an adequate measure of human well-being." She reminds us that "even as basic an issue as poverty has to be reexamined to take into account the psychological sense of deprivation that makes people feel poor." She warns us that a "narrowly focused materialism that seeks to block out all considerations apparently irrelevant to one's own well-being tends finally to block out what is in fact most relevant."

Considerations of this sort were behind the shift of United Nations Development Program

"Human rights are universal in that they are possessed by all members of the human family, regardless of differences of gender, race, religion, politics or any other distinguishing characteristics. These rights form a core minimum standard binding on all states."

amme) UNDP's approach from measuring development solely in terms of (Gross National Product) GNP towards including other criteria to measure not just economic, but human development. We need to move on from the "sound bite" mentality and slogans of our media age to deeper reflection, and replace the "ethic" of success and materialism with an ethic of responsibility and care.

The potential for such a global ethic is inherent in our common humanity and the values shared by our faiths — the avoidance of harm to others, compassion and neighbourly love. Together with the values on which human rights are based — recognition of equal human dignity and worth, mutual respect, tolerance and justice — we have firm foundations for that ethic based on an inclusive approach, one which brings women and men into equal partnership and listens to the voices of the young and others too frequently ignored.

We need a new vision — a vision which is grounded in humility, in modesty, in self-criticism; a vision for a better world based on mutual respect, tolerance, compassion and human solidarity. We need to build a code of human conduct which informs professional and personal relationship and calls upon governors and governments alike to place respect for human rights and humanitarian principles at the very centre of their policies and actions.

A strong global ethic to share up political wills is essential to ensure prompt action by the international community in response to murder, rape and other atrocities or ethnic genocide, and to ensure that the perpetrators are

brought to justice. We need to promote greater international solidarity based on shared humanity acting as a common bond between all peoples.

In promoting such an ethic I have in mind that it is not just governments that have the responsibility to respect human rights and dignity, but individuals as well, whether in political positions, professional life, or acting as private citizens. Article I of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reminds us of this common responsibility: "All human beings... should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

It is in this spirit that I proposed to the (U.N.) General Assembly over a decade ago the promotion of a "new international humanitarian order." Since then Jordan has supported a number of resolutions in that context, the most recent being resolution 47/106 adopted last December which calls upon the secretary-general to report on the progress made to the assembly next year. The end of the cold war offers an exciting opportunity to the international community to review relationships between peoples and nations, and to identify common ethical values upon which to build our common future.

It is important that "the new world order" everybody is now talking about, is essentially humanitarian in content and intent. In the final analysis, it is humanitarian problems, affecting the lives of millions of our fellow human beings, which are the products of violations of human rights as well as the ultimate challenge to supporters of those rights. The growing number of increasingly complex humanitarian issues is a tragic comment on our times. It is therefore not surprising that, during the preparatory meetings prior to this conference, a number of governments highlighted the nexus between human rights and humanitarian issues. It is incumbent upon us, individually and collectively, to build the human solidarity in favour of human rights and freedoms.

Recently, Sir Yehudi Menuhin has suggested a "European parliament of cultures." Well, how about a people's parliament — a flexible approach to participation. Certainly something along these lines is needed.

We must support and join in partnership with the (Non-Governmental Organisations) NGO's the individual human rights advocate, and the peoples' movements throughout the world, which nurture and enact this solidarity. It is through these groups that the opening phrase of the U.N. Charter "We the peoples..." is given credibility and life.

Let us build on our common purpose here, so that the final outcome of this conference will do justice to the humanity which we all share. We can, we must, we will be inspired by this conference to commit ourselves to building a truly global ethic of respect for human rights and dignity.

U.N. peacekeeping forces thrown into question by Somali, Bosnian cases

By Pierre Tailleur
Agence France Presse

PARIS — The recent setbacks to the U.N. forces in Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Cambodia have cast doubt on the whole business of peacekeeping, making diplomats wonder aloud if the world was not expecting the blue berets to perform the impossible.

In Somalia, the U.N. forces have retaliated for the killing of 23 of their soldiers by a series of U.S. air-strikes that have been widely criticised around the world. If the air-raids were not controversial enough, the Pakistani U.N. troops' killing of at least 14 demonstrators Sunday brought public confidence in the United Nations' role to a new low.

In Cambodia, the constitutional process seems deadlocked by the pro-communist government's refusal to accept defeat in last month's elections. While the U.N. mission won world acclaim for the conduct of those elections, its authority is rapidly dissolving in the face of continued political stalemate and the threat by several

provinces to secede from Cambodia.

In Bosnia this weekend, U.N. commander General Philippe Morillon threatened a complete withdrawal of the blue berets if the warring parties did not cease-fire. His threat came at the end of a week which saw militiamen kill a Spanish soldier and strip a British reconnaissance patrol of

their weapons and flak-jackets.

The head of the French charity Medecins Sans Frontieres, Rony Brauman, said of the United Nations' performance: "We are attacking the weak and retreating before the strong."

On the one hand, Mr. Brauman told French Radio Monday, the U.N. forces were demonstrating "the political will to act as a

sort of fatherly, imperial power in Somalia, while on the other hand (in Bosnia) they are exhibiting a kind of artistic haziness, a kind of cosmetic intervention which retreats as soon as the Serbs show their strength."

There is even disagreement among the contributing nations as to what the U.N. forces should be doing.

Images from within and without distort Islam

Today's Muslims bear responsibility to set the record straight

On June 9, the Amman Baccalaureate School celebrated the graduation of the class of '93. Princess Sarvath Al Hassan, the school honorary president, had the following to tell the students before they head for their university studies:

MANY of you will, for the next few years, be living in foreign countries where you will be regarded as ambassadors of Jordan. You will have to represent your country with dignity and eloquence. You will find friendship and hospitality, but you will also come across prejudice and ignorance. Sadly, misconceptions about our part of the world abound, most commonly concerning the position of women and religious minorities in Islam, subjects which are always of interest to many, irrespective of their own race, gender or creed. I would like to put it to you that the responsibility rests with the Muslims of today and those of you who have grown up side by side with your Muslim contemporaries, all of us, to set the record straight.

We are all aware of the image of Islam in the West; a savage, intolerant religion, a monolithic creed that is socially regressive, fundamentalist in inclination and irredeemably oppressive for women and minorities. But this is not the Islam that the Prophet Muhammad preached; nor is it the Islam of the Koran. But what are the facts? I would like to begin by examining the roots of the religion — its scripture, the revealed word of God, and the reported practices of its Prophet — to illuminate the intended and legitimate position of Muslim women and the attitude to non-Muslims, especially those who belong to the other monotheistic religions.

Islam responded to the abhorrent practices of 7th century Arabia: its idolatry, immorality, unashamed commercialism; its female infanticide, unrestrained polygamy, and its widespread denial of human rights. It was in a

real sense an iconoclastic social reform movement. The hostility that greeted the early Muslims is testimony of how it challenged the accepted orthodoxies, and the courage with which they bore this enmity speaks with equal force to their belief in its progressive, liberating message. Everyone is familiar with the Bible's account of the creation of humanity. First Adam was created, and then, from the rib, God created Eve, as a companion for him. In this account, woman is secondary to and derivative of man. In the Koran, on the other hand, the principle of creation is explicit: (in Sura 51 Verse 49): "And of everything we have created pairs".

Neither man nor woman is secondary in the Koranic account of creation: they are, rather, dependent upon each other. Neither precedes the other. No priority or superiority is implicit or expressed. And if women and men were thus created equal by God, the ultimate arbiter of value, then equal they must remain.

There are many Hadiths of the Prophet that stress that there is no special merit in having a boy child rather than a girl. In fact the Prophet said:

"Whoever hath a daughter, and doth not prefer his male children to her, may God bring him into paradise".

"Indeed, in spiritual terms, the Koran maintains this message of fundamental equality. It specifically addresses both men and women, giving them parallel roles and responsibilities in the spiritual life, and equal rewards and punishments for their actions. For Islam, above all, preaches the dignity of each and every human soul. The Prophet Muhammad is reliably reported to have said:

"All people are equal. They are as equal as the teeth on a comb".

There is no claim of merit of an Arab over a non-Arab, or of a white over a black person, only God-fearing people merit a preference with God".

Among Islam's many innova-

tions were the guarantee of basic rights, including property rights, to oppressed groups such as women and slaves. This egalitarian structure is the bedrock of the religion's basic theology, and women who became the first converts played an active role in establishing the first Muslim communities; indeed, most of our knowledge of those communities can be traced to the accounts of women, such as the Prophet's wife Sayida Aisha.

One person in 10 on this earth is a Muslim woman. A phenomenon of this scale has consequences for everyone in our increasingly inter-dependent world; and a greater understanding of what it means to be a Muslim woman can therefore be of benefit to all.

Women were accorded rights in the social, political and economic spheres: the right of paid work, ownership, learning, dignity, liberty, thought, movement, marriage, inheritance, pilgrimage, jihad: all spheres of temporal life are equally open to all Muslims. There are numerous Hadiths of the Prophet on all of these topics which fully illustrate his tolerant and far-sighted views. And while motherhood is physiologically exclusive to women, nothing in the Koran is exclusive to men. This brings to mind the tale of a bright young Muslim man who was offered a job in a company owned by a woman. Although he was ideally qualified for the position, and although it was precisely the job he sought, he felt it would be problematic to accept it, on the grounds that his religion did not permit him to work for a woman. A friend of his, on hearing this, reminded him that the Prophet Muhammad himself had worked for a woman, namely Sayida Khadija. Mortified, the young man took the job.

Although amusing, stories of this kind — which I am sad to say are not uncommon — illustrate the misconceptions that prevail on the position of women in Islam. The criterion is one of qualification, ability to do the

job, and not gender. What modern advocates of equal opportunities have only recently achieved, Muslim communities preached fourteen centuries ago in the Arabian desert.

In many countries which espouse Islam as a state religion, we see practices that sometimes mirror those of the Jahiliya period. It has been argued that this is so because Islam restricts the rights of women. I would like to argue that Islam does no such thing. Localised social wrongs cannot be laid at the door of the religion, for most of these wrongs are addressed clearly in the Koran or by the Prophet himself in the Hadith. In most cases, the practices in question are relics of culture unrelated to Islam. I would like to turn now to a few specific areas which illustrate this point, namely, marriage and polygamy, seclusion, and the veil.

Several Koranic verses clearly recognise women's rights to equality in marriage. On this basis, most schools of Islamic law have granted women the right to be empowered, by marriage contract, to initiate divorce or to stipulate their marriage conditions, including monogamy, financial compensation, rights to the custody of children, and so on. Unfortunately, Muslim women are rarely aware that they are entitled to stipulate any such conditions, although it is in full accordance with the Koran's emphasis on the equal worth of all human beings. It is also certainly consistent with Islam's recognition of the female right to control important aspects of their lives.

Before examining the Koranic injunction on the controversial subject of polygamy, it is worth bearing in mind that in ancient societies — Persia, India, China, Greece and Rome — polygamy was a fact of life. In pre-Islamic Arabia, it was unrestrained. The Koran has been widely interpreted as limiting this previously unlimited practice to socially necessary cases — making provision for the widows and orphans

of war. The relevant verse addresses the plight of orphans, and continues:

"Marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with them, then only one".

(Sura 4, Verse 3) However, later on in the very same Sura, it continues: "And ye are never able To be just and fair As between women". (Sura 4, Verse 129)

This is clearly open to multiple interpretations. It can be argued that if God so clearly states that men will not be able to treat more than one wife equally, then the conditions under which polygamy is acceptable should be seriously considered. As to divorce, although it is regarded as a necessary evil, no stigma is attached to a divorced woman in Islam.

Another supposed proof that Islam discriminates against women is the practice of veiling and secluding women. As with the issues concerning marriage, an examination of the scripture and the facts of early Islamic practice is required to distinguish between the essence of belief, and the particulars of circumstances and man-made custom.

Seclusion was firmly established in the urban cultures of Byzantium and Persia. However, Sayida Aisha's account traces the custom of the seclusion of the Prophet's wives to his desire to create a distance between his household and the community, for reasons of protection and privacy. The Koranic verses relating to seclusion clearly apply only to these ladies. And for some time after his death, they were the only Muslim women to practice it.

The Koran enjoins Muslims, men and women alike, to be modest in dress and demeanour. I cannot help thinking as I observe the peacocks of our society that this is an eminently sensible recommendation. But the almost complete veiling that typifies parts of the Muslim world today

is certainly not required in Islam. It is worth pointing out that during the Hajj — the most sacred act a Muslim can perform — a woman must reveal her face.

Veiling was prevalent among the urban upper classes in non-Muslim areas such as Syria, Palestine, Greece and Rome, but the practice was not introduced into Arabia by Islam, and is nowhere explicitly prescribed in the Koran. It is thought to be a relic of Christian Byzantine culture, emulated by the Arabs when they conquered Damascus after the death of the Prophet.

My aim in focusing on the early years of Islam has been to show that nothing in religion makes a woman a second-class citizen. But, despite notable exceptions, women have struggled to hold their place in Muslim societies. In ignorance of their rights, they have often become second-class, marginal citizens, if citizens at all. The rights given to them in the Koran must be reclaimed. However, the majority of Muslim women live in rural areas, having limited access to the schooling which would permit them to know and assert their birthrights as Muslims. Access to information is thus of primary importance. And although many women do participate in their national workforces, only through further education will they be allowed to play the full and creative role in society that Islam had the courage to envisage. After all the Prophet himself said:

"The acquisition of knowledge is a duty incumbent on every Muslim, male and female".

An indication of Islam's belief in peaceful coexistence with other faiths can also be provided by examination of its scriptures. The Holy Koran describes the followers of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism alike as "people of the book", all sharing the revelation of the one God, and all worthy of respect. The tolerance of Islam on the question of religious minorities is illustrated by the famous Koranic injunction:

"There shall be no compulsion in religion" (Sura 2, Verse 256)

Which is further amplified by the instruction to: "Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject it" (Sura 8 Verse 29), stressing, "To you be your way and to me be mine" (Sura 6 Verse 9). Clearly, these passages form a powerful argument for social and religious pluralism.

Our Prophet, who married

both a Christian and a Jew, when asked why he rose to his feet when the funeral procession of a Jew passed by, replied: "I know. Is it not a human soul?"

In all these areas, then, the picture we get of Islam as it was originally and most vitally practiced, bears little relation to its image abroad. It was a religion with secure foundations in human equality: its object in this world was to construct the perfect society, one free from injustice and prejudice. And the achievement of that object is as worthy an aim for the twenty-first century as the seventh.

Today I speak to you on the eve of the anniversary of the Eid Al Nahda — The Arab Renaissance. We Arabs must play our part in the revitalisation of our culture. We who know these truths now find ourselves in a position of responsibility: we must make them known, within our communities and beyond.

It is one of the greatest tragedies of mankind that political considerations have forced the compassion and tolerance of our forefathers to take a back seat, when one of the most frequently used phrases in the Koran is "Ar Rehman Ar Rahim".

Egyptian artist exhibits

A world of faces staring you in the face

AMMAN — As soon as you enter Riwaq Al Balkaa, the art gallery where Bahgory's work is on display, you are overwhelmed by a mélange of sensations provoked by the many eyes that stare at you from different directions and concealed corners of the old, secluded and once desolate dwelling, now exhibition hall.

Mr. Bahgory's 54 collage acrylic works mainly portray faces and bodies formed by putting together rags, cardboard, coffee filters and other scrap items around the basic components of the "form". With three main elements, namely the eyes, the nose and what the painter calls the unseen line or the axis, his faces are formulated. Circles, curved lines and axis constitute his bodies. He goes directly to the basics, without putting much, if any, emphasis on the details.

ART REVIEW

One face may very well contain three or more faces, each having a different expression by using his unseen line. This technique enables him to succeed in fashioning very expressive faces, and meaningful figures. The unseen line, the artist explains, is one not seen by the viewer but only by the artist, "upon which the face or figure sets and which creates the equilibrium in the painting which is the key to perfection".

According to the artist, the

confusion which the viewer may notice in some of the paintings is intentional. Confusion, when properly based on the "axis", is supposed to create beauty in a picture.

His mastery is also obvious in his caricatures where he is able to represent a whole phenomenon through minimal lines, circles and a few dots.

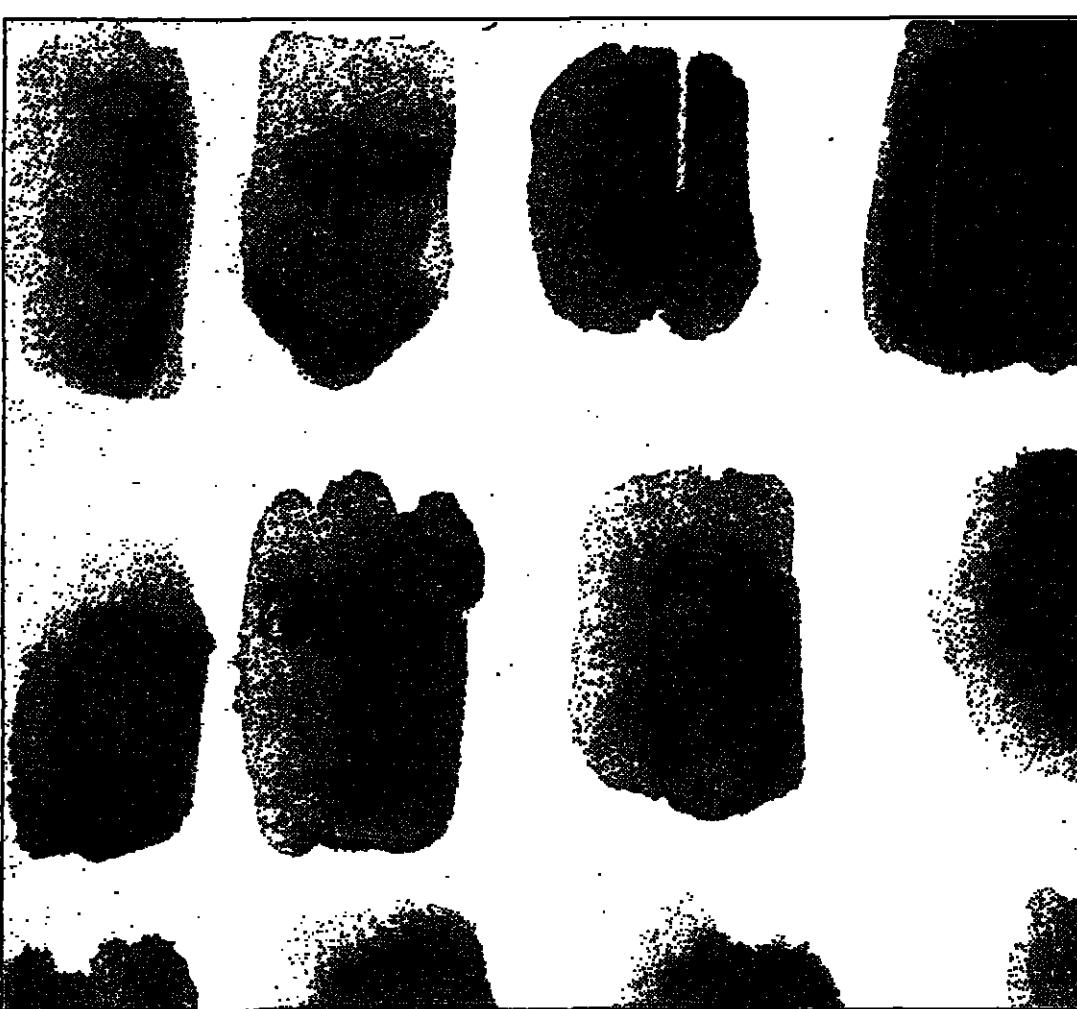
"Why focus on the eye?" "A human being is an eye" he says. "Since the oldest times the eye was the key to the spirit, the key to the world. It opens at birth and closes at death."

"And why use collage as a technique?" "Collage accentuates the drama and creates a sharper contrast and thus a strong expression through the interaction of the different materials used."

Mr. Bahgory defines himself as "an artist affected by an internal inspiration caused by God, a researcher who found himself in his art." Nevertheless, the impact of Picasso's style is evident in his work.

The Egyptian artist, who studied fine arts in Cairo and Paris, held around 100 exhibitions worldwide and won five caricature prizes. He is a writer as well as a painter. His written work includes 15 illustrated children's books, one humour book and two caricature books.

His exhibition, which was opened under the patronage of Princess Wijdan Ali, Sunday June 13, will go on until July 13.



Bahgory's faces on display at Al Riwaq

Hardship drives Bulgaria's children into vice and crime

By Vessela Sergueva
Agence France Presse

SOFIA — Every night about 50 grimy children hang out by Sofia central railway station — their only home in a city grappling with a daunting post-communist moral, social and economic crisis.

From time to time, the police take the children away to wash and feed them but the youngsters are soon back. All of them smoke and sniff glue. The girls prostitute themselves and the boys are abused by homosexuals.

Elsewhere, gangs of violent teenagers going under fascist-sounding names like "Black Mask", "Iron Chains" or "Hitler Youth" routinely indulge in rape.

attacks on cripples and torturing animals.

Teenage prostitutes ply their trade in the city's private hotels and along the motorways. Press reports even speak of 12-year-olds having sex for chocolate.

Up to 12,000 orphans and abandoned children live in run-down orphanages in rural areas. Often these buildings have little or no heating or hot water, and psychologists say such institutions are breeding grounds for juvenile delinquents.

At Monastere in southern Bulgaria, there are some 50 children aged from six to 14 in the village orphanage. Only seldom do they

get meat to eat or milk and have never even seen a radio or television.

At Vetren on the Danube, another 50 children in an institution for mentally-handicapped orphans are housed in a building so ramshackle it could collapse at any time.

The 70 children at Kalen village orphanage in the northwest have no running water let alone hot water.

Juvenile delinquency has soared in recent years with 10,156 crimes recorded in 1992, including 38 murders, 156 rapes and 655 burglaries. A total of 11,224 children were convicted, five times

more than in 1988. Today, children are responsible for one out of every four thefts, according to statistics.

Delinquency is most prevalent among children of ethnic minorities whose members are usually poorer than average and suffer more in times of economic hardship.

At Boichinovtsi prison for minors in northwestern Bulgaria, 53 of the 165 inmates are Turks and 48 Gypsies.

Drug abuse has assumed "terrifying" proportions among teenagers in the capital, according to a doctor at one psychiatric clinic, with youngsters between

12 and 14 the worst affected. Heroin, sold at about \$15 a gramme, is widely available even in schools. About 15,000 youngsters in Bulgaria are registered as addicts including 9,000 in the capital.

School teachers complain that they can no longer cope with violent pupils. Some schools hire bodyguards to protect the younger children from intimidation by the bigger pupils who force them to hand over pocket money and even clothing.

As many as 84 per cent of nursery school teachers said their charges frequently played games which featured "murders".

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Bosnian Croat, Muslim and Serb commanders agree to ceasefire

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The top military commanders of Bosnia's three warring factions signed a general ceasefire agreement here Tuesday to come into effect at 1000 GMT Friday across the war-torn republic, officials said.

During the meeting at Sarajevo Airport, Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic also gave a written pledge to allow U.N. troops into the besieged east Bosnian Muslim enclave of Gorazde Wednesday, they said.

It was the first meeting since the Bosnian war began 14 months ago of Gen Mladic, Bosnian Croat militia chief Milivoj Petkovic and the head of the mainly Muslim Bosnian army, Rasim Delic.

In Geneva, U.N. mediator Thorvald Stoltenberg confirmed the agreement and said the Bosnian Serbs had also pledged to allow drinking water to the besieged Muslim enclave, Srebrenica.

Srebrenica and Gorazde are among six Muslim-majority enclaves declared safe havens by the United Nations. But Serbian forces have continued their attacks on Gorazde, reportedly advancing to within less than a kilometre from the city's defence lines.

Intense fighting has also broken out in recent weeks in central Bosnia between Croats and Muslims, erstwhile allies against the Serbian secessionists.

Mr. Stoltenberg said Gen. Mladic agreed to let eight U.N. military observers into Gorazde by about midday Wednesday.

French General Philippe Morillon, the commander of U.N. troops in Bosnia and Swedish General Lars-Eric Wahlgren, the commander of the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia chaired the airport meeting.

Muslim forces pressed an offensive against Croats, their former allies in Bosnia's 14-month-old civil war. Reuter reporter John Fullerton, reporting from the central Bosnian town of Vitez, said fresh battles had erupted between Croats and Muslims on the outskirts of Novi Travnik.

Fighting extended to the village of Dohac and the eastern approach road to Travnik as well as to a strategically important road junction linking the two towns with Vitez.

Croat radio described the situation in the areas as dramatic and said the Muslims were pressing a fierce attack, pouring fire into Novi Travnik said to be packed with 20,000 refugees.

Muslim-controlled Sarajevo Radio said artillery attacks on Gorazde had wounded so many that the corridors of the town's main hospital Tuesday were packed with badly injured people.

On Monday alone, 69 people were killed in a "hellish" rocket

and artillery attack, the radio said.

At the United Nations, Bosnia's U.N. ambassador, Mohammad Sacirbey, said 700 people had been killed since the Serbs launched the latest offensive on Gorazde four weeks ago.

"Every house in the city is either a morgue or a hospital," Britain's Sky Television reported him as saying.

His assertion could not be independently confirmed. Since the war in Bosnia began 14 months ago, when Serbs opposed to the republic's independence took up arms, not a single ceasefire has held for long and most were broken almost immediately.

The latest fighting in Bosnia was taking place in spite of a ceasefire ordered by the republic's collective presidency in Geneva Sunday.

In New York, the United Nations recommended sending 7,500 fresh troops, backed by air power, to guard the safe areas designated by the U.N. Security Council.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali called this the "light option" and said 34,000 troops were needed if the areas were going to be properly protected.

It was not clear who would provide the additional 7,500 troops, let alone another 34,000. Bangladesh announced Tuesday it would send troops to Bos-

nia but gave no details on how many.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said in Vienna his country was ready to commit troops to protect safe areas in Bosnia but would not send its men into "besieged fortresses under fire."

The six designated Muslim safe areas — Gorazde, Srebrenica, Sarajevo, Bihac, Tuzla and Zepa — are all besieged. Four of them are under steady fire.

At the moment, the United Nations has about 9,000 troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, mostly supplied by European countries. The troops have been frequently mocked and humiliated by combatants from all sides.

Dr. Ghali, in recommending the dispatch of another 7,500 troops, said they should be given heavy equipment, including armoured personnel carriers.

The United Nations suspended its humanitarian relief to the besieged Bosnian capital of Sarajevo Tuesday after gunfire erupted close to two incoming aircraft, officials said.

A U.N. relief agency spokesman told Reuters relief flights were halted at noon, the second suspension in two days, after two pilots reported "multiple firing and flashes too close to their planes." They were not hit but the airport control tower was, she said.



Serb soldiers fire a mortar from a trench near the eastern Bosnian Muslim enclave of Gorazde (AFP photo)

Secessionist prince said to flee Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodia's secessionist prince, Norodom Chakrapong, and his armed followers left their self-proclaimed eastern "autonomous zone" and crossed into Vietnam Tuesday, a U.N. military spokesman said.

A U.N. military observer watched as Prince Chakrapong and a convoy of 20 vehicles carrying supporters crossed the border at 6.30 a.m. and turned over their weapons to a Vietnamese border guard post, the spokesman said.

Prince Chakrapong, who backed the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in last month's U.N.-run election, has alleged that the Royalist FUNCINPEC Party of his half-brother and political enemy, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, won through fraud.

On Saturday he declared an unspecified number of provinces on the Vietnam border an autonomous zone to be ruled by himself and two allies — a secessionist movement which threatened to rekindle the civil war.

"The secessionist movement does seem to be evaporating. It's looking pretty good today," a senior diplomat said.

Prime Minister Hun Sen, head of the government that came second in the elections, travelled in the rebellious east Monday and Tuesday and reported to the United Nations that the most populous province was no longer in secession.

"That is very good for us," a U.N. military officer said. "It means we won't have to deal with it militarily."

Hun Sen said all restrictions placed on the movements of U.N. personnel in Kompong Cham province, where his brother Hun Neng is governor, had been lifted.

Kompong Cham was one of at least three eastern provinces which disgruntled leaders of the CPP declared autonomous.

The former Communist government, which Vietnam installed in 1979 after invading to oust the Khmer Rouge, won 51 seats in the May 23-28 election against 58 for FUNCINPEC. It claims the polls were fraudulent and refuses to recognise the result.

Most diplomats have viewed the secessionist movement as a CPP ploy to win as great a role as possible in a future coalition government.

The 120-seat National Assembly, which met for the first time Monday, is charged with writing a constitution within three months and then forming a government.

"It's all about power-sharing arrangements," another diplomat said. "Who will get what and what will the CPP be left with?"

Head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk, father of both the feuding princes, Tuesday hosted a lunch meeting of the National Assembly members, attended by CPP leaders and well as those from FUNCINPEC.

A palace source said it was an informal session designed to create personal relationships among politicians who had been bitter enemies during the 13-year civil war and the violent election campaign.

Jurassic Park makes 13-year-old a star

LOS ANGELES (R) — Ariana Richards, a blonde 13-year-old who has a starring role in Jurassic Park is about to become the best known teenager in America. There will be look-alike dolls as well as games and other toys bearing her likeness. All this for playing second fiddle to a bunch of mechanical dinosaurs, the stars of the record-setting blockbuster of the movie which opened across the United States. Early reports say the film set a record for gross receipts in the first three days of its release, taking in \$48.3 million. Batman Returns is in second place with \$47.7 million. Richards plays Alexis, a precocious 12-year-old visiting her grandfather at Jurassic Park. The grandfather, played by British actor Sir Richard Attenborough, is a billionaire developer who has brought together a bunch of scientists to produce living dinosaurs by cloning the DNA molecule from the relics of the huge animals who ruled the earth during the Jurassic period 65 million years ago.

3 women chop off Pakistani girl's tongue

ISLAMABAD (R) — Three Afghan women refugees chopped off the tongue of a Pakistani girl who refused to tell them where her family had hidden its valuables, the Pakistani news agency APP said Tuesday. Ten-year-old Farhana was alone at her home in the remote town of Pishin in southwestern Baluchistan province when the three women broke in and demanded cash and valuables, APP said. When the child refused to tell them where these were hidden, the women chopped off her tongue with a knife and fled, it said.

'Cosby is arranging financing for NBC buyout

NEW YORK (AP) — Entertainer Bill Cosby is making another effort to arrange financing for a bid to buy the NBC television network from General Electric Co., the Wall Street Journal reported Monday. G.E. has said the network isn't for sale. The newspaper reported that unidentified industry sources said Cosby is working with the investment banker Goldman Sachs and Co. on putting together a new bid. Cosby had explored the possibility of making a bid for NBC last fall but nothing ever came of the effort because the bid didn't approach the \$3.5 billion to \$4 billion that G.E. was believed to be seeking, the paper said. It said Cosby is now lining up a new group of investors among Hollywood figures to raise the bid.

Euro Disney's rivals band together

PARIS (AP) — Five of Europe's largest theme parks said they are teaming up to devise strategies for improving business in the face of rigorous competition from Euro Disneyland. The parks will offer visitors discount coupons for use at the other four parks and will intensify efforts to ensure that travel agents do not over-promote Euro Disneyland at their expense. A joint advertising campaign is possible later on, officials of the five parks said. The parks, grouped together under the name, Great European Theme Parks, includes Alton Towers in England, Europa-Park in Germany, Liseberg in Sweden, Efteling in the Netherlands and Parc Asterix in France. Together, the five parks drew 9.8 million visitors in 1992, compared with 11 million for Euro Disneyland in the first 12 months after its grand opening outside Paris in April 1992. Officials of the five parks said they might open their ranks to theme parks elsewhere in Europe.

China nabs obscene phone caller after 5 years

PEKING (R) — Police in China's capital have arrested a bank worker who plagued women with obscene phone calls for five years, "to satisfy his abnormal mentality," the official Legal Daily reported. Li Yumei, 33, began making harassing telephone calls in 1987 after his own love affair broke up. He gradually settled on seven victims, including two schoolgirls and one 73-year-old woman, whom he pestered constantly, the newspaper said. "He would tease and say obscene words to a person he didn't know at all in order to achieve revenge and satisfy his abnormal mentality," the newspaper said. It said the women were so embarrassed that the bravest of them only reported the caller to police this month after enduring five years of telephone torment. Li was arrested three days later. Obscene callers are still relatively rare in China, where there are only 1.6 telephones per 100 people.

Azeri government troops, rebels clash

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Azerbaijani government troops clashed Tuesday with rebel forces near the town of Adzhikabul northwest of Baku leaving dead and wounded on both sides, the Azerbaijani News Agency, Turan, reported.

An Azerbaijani Defence Ministry spokesman contacted by telephone denied the report and said Adzhikabul, located about 120 kilometres northwest of Baku was calm.

The report said the rebel forces launched the attack on government troop positions following the expiration of an ultimatum issued by the rebels, who are demanding the resignation of President Abulfaz Elchibey.

Turan, quoting information from the press centre of the Azerbaijani Popular Front, which backs Mr. Elchibey, said both sides in the clash used artillery and armoured vehicles.

It said fighting was continuing at Adzhikabul and added that government troops had succeeded in neutralising a separate group of rebel forces in clashes near the coastal town of Ayat, about 120 kilometres south of Baku.

The report came as the rebel forces, led by Suret Guseinov, continued to take control of towns to the northwest, west and south of Baku amid a deepening political crisis in the Azerbaijani capital.

Meanwhile Azerbaijan's ex-Communist elder statesman Geidar Aliyev made an astonishing comeback to power in Baku Tuesday when he was elected parliament chairman, local journalists said.

Thirty-seven parliamentarians voted for Mr. Aliyev and three against at a session attended by President Elchibey. There are 50 deputies in the Azeri parliament.

Azerbaijani officials and news agency reports said earlier that 48 U.S. nationals, dependents of U.S. diplomats and businessmen in Baku were evacuated aboard a

U.S. military plane Tuesday due to the unrest.

Turan reported that Alimrah Gummetov, a former leader of the Popular Front which backs Mr. Elchibey, had "taken control" of the coastal city of Lenkoran about 250 kilometres south of Baku and was also demanding that Mr. Elchibey step down.

The evacuations and heightened military tension came after Guseinov met Sunday with Mr. Aliyev in Gyandzha and reiterated his demand that Mr. Elchibey quit.

Mr. Guseinov, who was sacked by Elchibey in February, accused his former political master of corruption and "violating human rights."

Aliyev, the former secretary general of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, last week entered into talks with Mr. Elchibey for the creation of a powerful new state council which Mr. Aliyev said he wanted to lead.

Mr. Aliyev is parliamentary speaker in the Azeri Republic of Nakhichevan, an enclave southwest of Armenia.

Mr. Elchibey, earlier Tuesday, insisted that the insurgency, which he has described as a coup attempt, would be put down without violence after some 50 troops loyal to Mr. Guseinov were disarmed and detained for questioning in Baku.

The government meanwhile deployed soldiers and police units around the capital, a force of just 1,200 men drawn from Interior Ministry troops and the presidential guard.

Meanwhile, Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenian authorities have "lost control" over some military units opposed to the peace plan for the disputed territory agreed by their political masters, a spokesman for the Nagorno-Karabakh legislature said Tuesday.

Gegham Bagdasarian, identified commanders of those units defying the authorities and

ing to withdraw from Kelbajar — strategic region sandwiched between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh — without guarantees that Baku won't send troops back into the area.

After weeks of resistance, representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh's ethnic Armenian majority conditionally endorsed the plan put forward by the 53-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The turnaround came after the speaker of the local parliament, Georgi Petrossian, resigned Monday and was replaced by his top deputy, Karen Baburian.

Baburian, in a letter to CSCE mediator Mario Rafanelli, said he needed a month to begin implementing the plan because of "the deterioration of the domestic situation" according to Mr. Baburian.

"This will give us time to stabilise the situation and meet our commitments" which some military units "over which we have no control" are opposing, the spokesman said.

Mr. Baburian did not say how many of the 15,000 troops had rebelled.

Mr. Bagdasarian said the endorsement of the Stepanakert authorities was the result of strong pressure from Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrossian, who flew to the Nagorno-Karabakh capital Monday.

The CSCE peace plan calls for Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenians to give up control of a corridor of land linking the enclave to Armenia as a first step to a ceasefire and the deployment of international monitors in the region.

The plan has already been accepted by Armenia and Azerbaijan.

But the enclave's military leaders had refused to abandon the strategic Kelbazar corridor, which they seized in April, unless Baku promised not to send its troops into the region.

Thatcher gives unexpected support for Major

LONDON (R) — Former British Premier Margaret Thatcher has put aside her differences with embattled Prime Minister John Major and said a challenge to his leadership of the Conservative Party is out of the question — for now.

As Mr. Major struggles to reassert his authority, his predecessor, toppled by a party revolt in 1990, unexpectedly threw his weight behind other Conservative politicians who have rallied to support the most unpopular British leader since the war.

"There can be no question of a leadership challenge at the moment. Any such challenge would be ill-judged and ill-timed," Lady Thatcher told ITN news Monday.

The unassuming Mr. Major was Lady Thatcher's preferred successor after she was ousted by her own party as an election liability.

But she has since been a far from enthusiastic supporter and has supported a rightwing Conservative revolt against the European Community's Maastricht Treaty.

The opposition Labour Party described this twin support for Mr. Major as "the kiss of the viper."

South Africa democracy talks face boycott threat

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Conservative blacks threatened Tuesday to quit South Africa's constitutional talks, accusing the ANC and others of manipulation.

The government of the Kwazulu black homeland, led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, told the forum of 26 political groups that a date for the country's first all-race election could not be set until constitutional options had been fully debated.

The Kwazulu government and Chief Buthelezi's political party, the Inkatha Freedom Party, both submitted resolutions calling for their proposed federal constitution to be debated.

They want autonomy for Kwazulu and Natal under a new constitution. The African National Congress (ANC), rivaling for power with Inkatha, is joined by allies in insisting for a unitary South Africa with some powers devolved to regions.

Kwazulu is one of 10 nominally-independent or self-governing black homelands set up by Pretoria under its previous policy of grand apartheid to segregate the races.

Kwazulu delegate Ben Ngubane told the forum the homeland was "extremely concerned" that the negotiations were proceeding as if the ANC plan for a unitary state was a fait accompli.

Referring to the poll date of April 27 next year, proposed last week by the ANC alliance and the government of President F.W. De Klerk, Mr. Ngubane

said it was impossible to set a date before it had been decided what the country would be voting for.

"Are we going to vote for the election of a constituent assembly or for the empowerment of a federal legislature after member states have already been established?" he asked.

"We feel the obligation to warn all participants that the Kwazulu government has reached the end of its road in tolerating the manipulation of this process which is steamrolling through the real issues, preventing full awareness and full debate on the possible alternatives."

Ngubane said if delegates rejected the resolution calling for debate of the federal option, Kwazulu would refuse to lend its approval to any decisions of the negotiating council.

"We will implement what we consider a constructive form of filibustering until there is clarity on the process," he said.

The homeland government would withdraw altogether, "if we assess that discussions on subject matter other than the form of state and violence are getting ahead (of those issues)."

"Whoever pushes negotiations on the basis of a two-stage process centred around a Constituent Assembly and the denial of federalism, and in spite of the fact that we are providing consensus, will be politically responsible for the withdrawal from negotiations of the Kwazulu government," Mr. Ngubane said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kravchuk proposes confidence referendum

KIEV (R) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, under pressure from striking miners, called Tuesday for a referendum of confidence in his leadership and elections for a new parliament. His rebellious prime minister demanded special powers to save the economy from collapse and end a constitutional conflict pitting him against Mr. Kravchuk. The premier, Leonid Kuchma, warned that otherwise the former Soviet republic would slide into dictatorship within a month. Mr. Kravchuk, apparently trying to seize the initiative after a week of labour unrest, proposed to parliament that the polls be held next December and January. "People who strike and hold meetings are waiting for our decision," a subdued Kravchuk told deputies. "This (my suggestion) can satisfy all of them." Deputies failed to agree on how to stage the ballots and called for further study. They also asked government ministers to outline what powers were needed to avert economic disaster. More than 200 coal mines and dozens of factories in conservative eastern Ukraine have joined a strike protesting against up to fivefold increases in basic food prices.

CIS shelves plans for joint force

MOSCOW (R) — The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Tuesday formally abandoned plans to set up joint armed forces. Interfax News Agency said. The agency said a meeting of defence ministers of the six Commonwealth signatories of a collective security treaty decided their joint military command should be transformed into a looser coordination body by the end of the year. Last month Russia rejected a proposal by the other five members of the treaty — Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan — which provided for the creation of joint CIS armed forces. Russia's top brass said Moscow, which would have been the backbone of the planned joint armed forces, cannot afford it. The joint military command was set up soon after the Soviet Union collapsed in late 1991 in a bid to save the Soviet Armed Forces from disintegration and keep Moscow's nuclear forces under joint control. But the plan has remained on paper as ex-Soviet republics started building their own armed forces and the nuclear states — Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan — agreed that the latter three would get rid of all nuclear arms.

Georgia wants German peacekeepers

BONN (R) — Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze, in an interview published Tuesday, said he would welcome a peace force of German troops to help end a bloody conflict with rebels

U.K. drops part of Patten plan

HONG KONG (AFP) — Britain has apparently dropped a key part of Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten's democratic reform proposals, as a fifth round of talks with China over the colony's political future continues in Peking. Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), quoting sources in the Chinese capital, said Britain and China had "agreed in principle" that the so-called functional constituencies in the Legislative Council should be based on "well-recognised organisations or professions" in the colony, which reverts to Chinese rule in 1997. Mr. Patten, looking to extend democracy in Hong Kong ahead of 1997, has proposed that industrial and commercial workers, rather than their bosses, elect nine Legislative Council seats reserved for functional constituencies in 1995 polls. Thus, for instance, textile workers would cast votes for the legislator representing the textile industry — instead of the current practice of having the seat filled by a Textile Executives' Association. RTHK said the Sino-British talks had yet to agree on other major portions of Mr. Patten's blueprint, including the make-up of an electoral college to fill up to 10 Legislative Council seats and the abolition of government-appointed District Board members.

Malawi votes for multi-party system

BLANTYRE (AFP) — Malawi was heading towards multi-party politics Tuesday after a referendum which acted like a catalyst for hopes of change in a country dominated by a single party for 30 years. Opposition movements forecast a crushing majority of 75 to 85 per cent in favour of their calls for a multi-party system. There was no official word on results, with counting proceeding very slowly at the National Referendum Commission in the administrative capital Lilongwe. It was refusing to issue partial returns. But the Alliance For Democracy (AFORD), one of the main groups advocating multi-party politics along with the United Democratic Front, calculated that by midday some 50 per cent of votes had been tallied. Its figures showed a clear victory for multi-party politics in the heavily-populated south.

Haiti lawmakers 'reinstate' Aristide, but with conditions he rejects

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Parliament Tuesday recognised the legitimacy of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and voted to let him choose Haiti's next prime minister.

But in a 15-hour legislative session boycotted by pro-Aristide representatives, the lawmakers fixed no date for the elected leader's return from exile. They attached conditions that Mr. Aristide long has rejected, including an across-the-board amnesty for the army that toppled him in September 1991.

The army-backed effort appears aimed at blunting international pressure on Haiti's de facto leaders, who are trying to give the appearance they are more willing to compromise than Mr. Aristide, the nation's first democratically elected president.

The nationally televised session, which concluded at 4:30 a.m. est (0830 GMT), was designed to show that the parliament was doing its best to resolve Haiti's political crisis, which began with the army ouster of Mr. Aristide and killing of as many as 500 people afterwards.

Support for Mr. Aristide remains high among Haiti's masses, but parliament is now dominated by Mr. Aristide's enemies, who work with the military-backed interim governments. The last civilian de facto leader, Prime Minister Marc Bazin, quit a week ago after losing the support of the army.

Thirty-seven of the 59 lawmakers present approved the amended resolution, which recognised the legitimacy of "the priest-citizen Jean-Bertrand Aristide" as president until his term ends Feb. 7, 1996.

"The president thus recognised chooses his prime minister in conformity with the constitution," the resolution states.

But the lawmakers said they would not ratify a new prime minister until Mr. Aristide publishes a declaration "condemning all forms of physical and moral violence" and agrees not to make comments supporting "plundering and necklacing" — killings of opponents by throwing a burning tire around their necks.

Mr. Aristide in recent months has renounced violence, but his overthrow came three days after

a speech in which he appeared to back the necklacing of his opponents. The military and civilian elite, which have often brutally dominated Haiti since independence in 1804, have maintained that they acted because they feared for their lives.

The lawmakers said Mr. Aristide must recognise their actions since the coup, including the appointment as army commander of Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras — the man Mr. Aristide says masterminded the coup. The legislators said the new Aristide-backed government must also submit a "proposal for a general amnesty."

One Aristide aide, Alexander Medard, said late Monday that he did not believe the exiled president could accept the resolution.

Mr. Aristide has insisted on an unconditional return to power. He demands the army be purged of corrupt officers and has been unwilling to grant an amnesty. He has said a hemisphere-wide trade embargo must be tightened, not lifted, until a date for his return is set.

The lawmakers fixed no such date.

Agassi, Navratilova, Edberg get boost from seeding committee

WIMBLEDON (Agencies) — Andre Agassi Monday became the lowest seeded men's defending champion in Wimbledon history — and got a boost to be seeded as high as he was.

Wimbledon officials installed the injury-plagued Agassi as the No. 5 seed, five places above his current world ranking, in recognition of his status as reigning title holder. The seeding means Agassi won't face a top eight player before the quarterfinals.

"It was a difficult decision bearing in mind he has not played much in the last couple of months because of injury," said Wimbledon referee Alan Mills. "But he is the defending champion and he proved he can play on grass."

Since seedings were introduced at Wimbledon in 1927, no men's champion who has returned to defend his title had been seeded lower than No. 6 the previous lowest-seeded defending champion was Jan Kodes, who was No. 6 the year after he won the boyo-out-hit tournament of 1973.

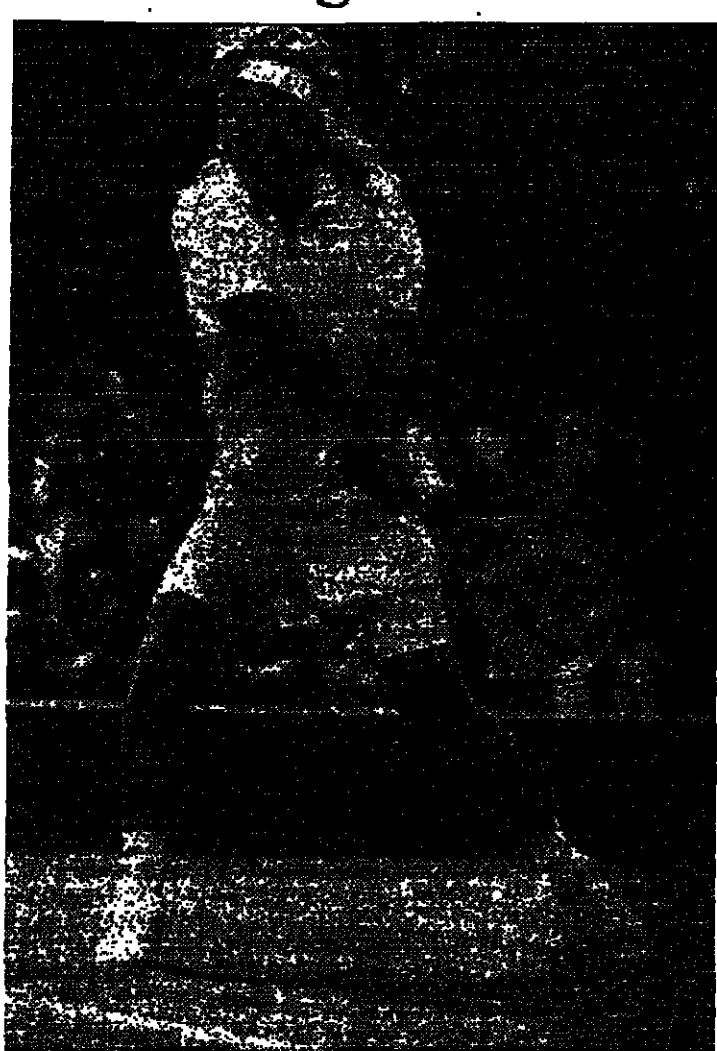
The seeding committee also used its own discretion in making Stefan Edberg the No. 2 seed behind Pete Sampras, while Jim Courier was bumped down to No. 3.

Among the women, Martina Navratilova's wish to avoid top-seeded Steffi Graf until the final was granted when she was elevated to No. 2 above higher-ranked Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

Agassi has dropped steadily in the rankings since surprising the tennis world last year by winning Wimbledon from the baseline. He has not played competitively since April 9 due to tendinitis in his right wrist.

Agassi missed the French Open and was considered questionable for Wimbledon, but he arrived Monday in Germany for a grass-court warm-up event in Halle. Agassi, was scheduled to play Tuesday against Carl Uwe Steeb, practiced for less than an hour and did not speak with reporters.

Courier, who has won four



Defending champion Andre Agassi

lova said she deserved the No. 2 spot because she was a better grass-court player than the Spaniard.

"I'm thrilled," Navratilova said when notified of the seedings Monday. "I don't think I really influenced the decision, but it makes sense for me to be upgraded. There are only two former champions in the tournament and it's right they should be in opposite halves of the draw."

"Her past record on grass

It said security was being stepped up to unprecedented levels for the two-week event starting on June 21 following the stabbing of Seles.

Players such as Graf, Agassi, Navratilova and Croatian-born Ivanisevic are among those earmarked for special security measures although organisers are reported to have ruled out giving every top player personal protection, the paper said.

All England Club chief executive Chris Goringe said security had been reviewed in the light of the knife attack on Seles but he was reluctant to give details.

The newspaper said fans would be subjected to metal detectors and personal searches, and players thought to be particularly vulnerable to attack would not be asked to play outside where spectators sit close to the court.

Navratilova ignores security precaution

Nine-time Wimbledon champion Navratilova said she will ignore an on-court security measure at the Eastbourne women's grass-court tournament, which has players sitting sideways to the fans.

In the wake of the stabbing of Seles by a fan in Hamburg, officials in Eastbourne decided to place the players' chairs side-on to the court to see the crowd during changeovers.

It means they have their backs to the umpire's chair instead of backing on to the crowd.

"I will flip my chair to face the court. I always face that way and I am not changing now," said Navratilova. "If someone has got a gun it doesn't matter which way the chair is facing."

Navratilova didn't get the chance to sit either way because her opening match against Romanian qualifier Ruxandra Dragomir was amongst thirty rained out Monday.

The sideways security measures was announced by Eastbourne tournament director George Hendon.

"We've taken some sensible precautions which we believe are sufficient to ensure no madman re-creates what happened in Hamburg," he said.

"There has always been a special relationship between the players and the public," he said. "We don't want to put a cage around the players and stop them being able to sign autographs."

Wet warm up for Wimbledon

Rain severely hit top stars preparations for Wimbledon at warm-up tournaments in Eastbourne and Manchester Monday.

Mediterranean Games begin today

AGDE, France (AP) — About 3,000 athletes, including a team from war-torn Bosnia and several of the world's top track stars, are assembling for one of the biggest multinational sports events of the year — the 12th Mediterranean Games.

President Francois Mitterrand will officiate at the opening ceremonies Wednesday in Agde, just south of Montpellier in southern France.

The opening will touch off a far-flung, multi-sports festival reminiscent of the 1992 Winter Olympics, with the venues spread through 19 cities and towns in the Languedoc-Roussillon region on the Mediterranean coast north of the French-Spanish border.

Athletes from 19 countries are expected to compete in 26 sports, including three non-Olympic events: golf, karate and rugby.

The Mediterranean Games began in 1951 at Alexandria, Egypt and were held every four years through 1991. Organisers then opted for a new four-year cycle beginning this year, hoping a stronger field could be attracted if the Med Games took place the year after the Summer Olympics, rather than the year before.

Most countries are sending less than Olympic-caliber teams to this year's games. But a good turnout of well-known runners, such as world record holders Noureddine Morceli of Algeria and Said Aouita of Morocco, make and field the highest-profile sport.

Italy and France are expected to dominate the overall medal race. Small countries such as Monaco and San Marino are also taking part.

Yugoslavia was a Med Games participant until its breakup three years ago. Now Croatia, Bosnia and Slovenia are sending teams.

Athletes from what remains as Serbia-dominated Yugoslavia will be allowed to compete under the designation of individual Mediterranean participant, similar to what they had at the 1992 Summer Olympics.

Although the opening ceremonies are scheduled for Wednesday, the basketball tournament began early so players would have time to rest before the European Championships in Germany at the end of the month.

The basketball competition has been renamed the "Drazen Petrovic tournament" in honour of the Croatian star who was killed in an auto accident last week. His Croatian teammates were late in arriving because of his funeral and their opening game with France was rescheduled.

The track and field events will be held Thursday through Monday in Narbonne, where the U.S. Olympic team practiced before heading to Barcelona last summer.

Aouita will participate in the 5,000 metres, the event in which he won the Olympic gold medal in 1984. He said he hopes his participation will be an example for other top athletes to compete in the Med Games.

British race hero dead

LONDON (AFP) — James Hunt, whose death at home here was announced Tuesday, was one of Britain's best loved racing drivers.

He secured the world title on a rainswept afternoon at Fuji, Japan, in 1976, at the wheel of a McLaren, beating his great Austrian rival Niki Lauda by one point.

It was the ultimate victory for the flamboyant racer who was dubbed "Hunt the shunt" because of his numerous accidents early in his career.

The 45-year-old had begun racing in 1967, working his way up through the ranks of Formula Ford into Formula One.

His big break came six years later when Lord Hesketh, the British aristocrat and avid motorsport fan, put him behind the wheel of a March.

Triple OT was sweet, but Bulls still control NBA finals

CHICAGO (AP) — The thrills have faded. The bodies are rested. Triple overtime is a sweet but distant memory for Phoenix. The Chicago Bulls still control the NBA finals.

They have an aroused Michael Jordan on their side and a goal of winning their third straight title by Friday night.

Hanging on through three overtimes to beat the Bulls 129-121 Sunday night cheered the Suns and eliminated the stigma of a "possible sweep." But Chicago leads the best-of-7 series 2-1 going into Wednesday night's game.

"It was a dramatic, memorable win," Phoenix coach Paul Westphal said Monday. "But it's just one game. I wish it counted double for all the minutes we had to play, but it doesn't."

"They have to realize they needed three overtimes to beat us," Chicago's Scottie Pippen said. "I don't think they can take confidence from that."

Neither is it encouraging to know that Jordan may be more pumped up than normal Wednesday night after missing 24 shots in game 3 and hearing praise for Kevin Johnson's defence against him.

"It's some sort of wakeup call," Jordan said of Chicago's first home playoff loss of the year. "I take (Johnson) seriously, but I don't see him as a defensive stopper."

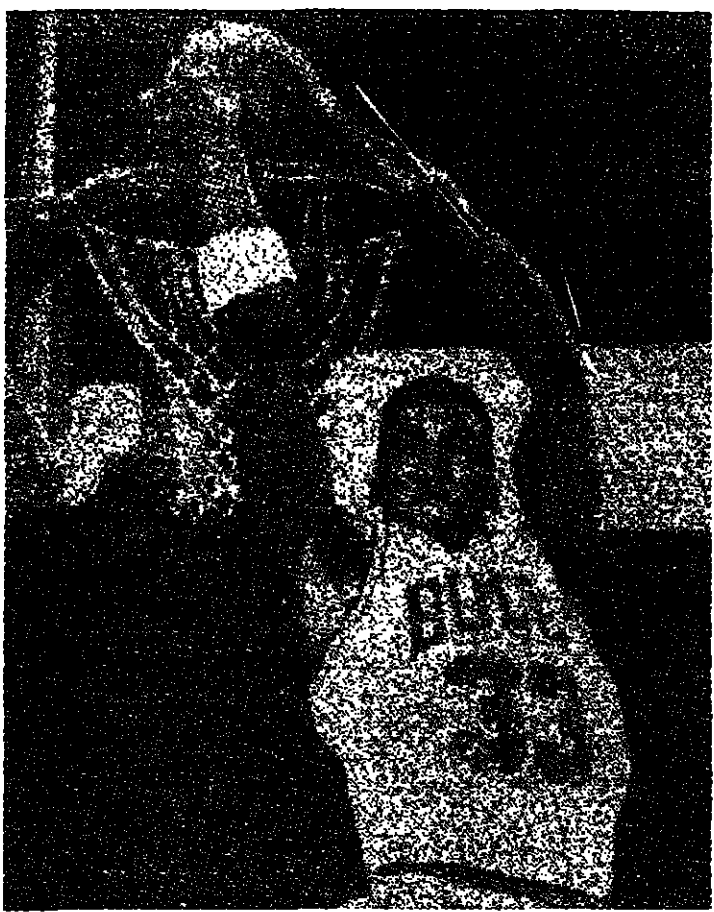
Jordan did score 44 points Sunday night, but made only 6 of 20 shots after the third quarter. He blamed that on fatigue rather than Westphal's pregame decision to have Johnson rather than Dan Majerle guard him.

The Suns, wary of firing up Jordan, went out of their way Tuesday to heap praise on him. Johnson brushed off a question of whether he had frustrated Jordan.

"You're not going to bait me into that. Whatever happened, I'm glad it happened the way it did," he said.

Westphal was even more cautious. "He's an unbelievable player. I don't think even Michael can guard Michael," he said.

Barkely said he had been for-



Scottie Pippen of the Chicago Bulls goes for a slam dunk

The Bulls' reliance Jordan and Pippen at critical times backfired Sunday. They took 34 of Chicago's 51 shots after the third quarter and 78 of 130 for the game. But they were pooped during the overtimes and their shooting showed it.

"You'll see more of a team game" Wednesday night, Chicago coach Phil Jackson said. "We played the three overtimes basically one-on-one."

He gave the Bulls a day off from practice Monday to recover from the 63-minute marathon. The Suns also could benefit from the time off before game 4.

Charles Barkley needs time to rest his right elbow, which was drained of fluid a half hour before Sunday night's game. He still went out and had 24 points and 19 rebounds in 53 minutes.

Barkely said he had been for-

U.S. Cup '93 Vogts to make changes against England

CHICAGO (Agencies) — German coach Berti Vogts plans to experiment with Thomas Helmer as Sweeper and throw new arrival Christian Woerns into defence as his tired side bid for victory against England in the final game of the U.S. Cup.

Vogts, who admits his team are drained, said Monday he would probably start Bayern Munich defender Helmer as sweeper in the Silverdome Saturday, for a game the Germans need to win to take the U.S. Cup from Brazil.

With Juventus left back Juergen Kohler forced to return home with a leg injury, Vogts called in Woerns a day after his Bayer Leverkusen team won the German Cup at the weekend, and will give him his fifth cap.

Vogts is happy his side are under some pressure to beat England.

"It's a good thing to know we must win if we are to win this tournament, because a situation when players start aiming for a 0-0 or 1-1 draw is not good. It is not possible to play England for a draw it's necessary to have the pressure to be able to beat England," he said.

Vogts, under pressure back home after several poor performances this year, claimed his experimental stage with team selection was over. "This is now the consolidating phase," he said.

"We must now find our working team with a view to the 1994 finals," he said.

He said one of the bright aspects of the U.S. Cup was the form of 21-year-old Bayern Munich midfielder Christian Ziege, who made his debut against Brazil. "He has fulfilled all my expectations."

"Taylor off the hook for now"

They weren't exactly singing his praises.

But the critics who called for Graham Taylor's head after last week's loss to the United States soccer team at least appeared to give the England manager a stay of execution after Sunday's 1-1 tie with Brazil.

"David Platt removed the noose from Graham Taylor's neck," said the tabloid Daily Mirror in a reference to England's scorer.

"The Juventus star saved his boss from yet another public hanging here," said the Mirror, which last week printed a poster saying "wanted, dead or alive — Graham Taylor, the outlaw of English football."

The papers who last week wanted Taylor to resign or be fired, said England's performance against the impressive Brazilians at least put a smile back on the faces of the manager as well as the English fans.

"Graham Taylor's death march was transformed into a happy samba," said the Sun. "At least Taylor can breathe a little easier and this battling performance has no doubt saved his job until the World Cup reopens next season."

World Cup preliminaries

Yemen hand Pakistan another defeat

HONG KONG (AP) — Yemen defeated Pakistan 3-0 Monday in their World Cup qualifier in the Asian Zone Group A actions.

The Yemenis led the first half 1-0.

Iraq blanked Jordan 4-0 earlier in Monday's only other game to further its lead in the five-team group which also includes China.

In Wednesday's matches

Jordan take on China, and Iraq meet Yemen.

The winner of the group

preliminaries will advance into the second round of the Asian Zone qualifying tournament.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Iraq	5	4	1	0	20	2	9
Yemen	6	3	2	1	12	9	8
China	5	3	0	2	11	2	6
Jordan	6	1	3	2	6	11	5
Pakistan	6	0	0	6	2	27	0

"Gullit to join Bayern Munich"

ROME (R) — Former European Footballer of the Year Ruud Gullit is on the verge of joining Bayern Munich, Italian newspapers reported Monday.

"Last Thursday (Bayern Vice President) Franz Beckenbauer and (General Manager) Uli Hoeness met the player who showed he was ready to play for Bayern," the Gazzetta Dello Sport quoted Bayern Chairman Fritz Scherer as saying.

Scherer, speaking in Chicago at the U.S. Cup, added club officials would travel to Milan this week to speak to the Dutchman, who has suffered a series of knee injuries over the past few seasons.

A spokesman at Milan confirmed that Gullit, whose contract expires at the end of June, would leave the Italian champions after six years with the club.

The Munich team finished second in the German League and will thus compete in the UEFA Cup next season.

Bayern captain Lothar Matthaus told the Gazzetta he would welcome the arrival of Gullit.

"I'm fascinated by the idea of having him as a teammate after playing against him so often when I was with Inter Milan and in Germany-Holland matches."

The veteran Matthaus added the plan was to play Gullit as a striker rather than in the midfield role he has adopted with Milan over the past few seasons.

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NORTH

♠ 7 4

♥ A 10 9 3

♦ 10 6

♣ 8 5 4

WEST

♠ 10 9 8

♥ 8 5 4

♦ 8 2

♣ A K J 7 2

EAST

♠ A K Q 3 2

♥ Q J 6

♦ A Q 9

♣ Q 10

The bidding:

South West North East

2 NT Pass 3 ♣ Pass

3 ♣ Pass 4 ♣ Pass

Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

The bridge neophyte tends to win a trick when offered the opportunity.

The expert delays winning a trick for as long as possible — and sometimes longer, as this hand from the Summer North American Championships in Toronto illustrates.

There are many players who refuse to open one no trump when holding a five-card major. There's no such hesitation, however, about a

two-no-trump opening bid. North's

three clubs inquired about five-card

major suits, and reasonable four-

spade contract was reached.

West cashed two high clubs and

continued with the deuce, ruffed by

East, and overruffed in the closed

hand. After drawing trumps in three

rounds, declarer ran the queen of

hearts and East, Bobby Levin of

Hallandale, Fla., ducked. South con-

tinued by running the jack of hearts,

and Levin ducked again! Convinced

that West held the king of hearts,

declarer went to the well one more

time. Now East won and returned

the jack of diamonds and, although

the finesse won, declarer was shut

off from the ace of hearts and could

not avoid losing a diamond — down

one.

Declarer tackled the wrong red

suit. Had the trump entry to dummy

been used to take a diamond finesse,

declarer can determine how to play

the hearts. If the diamond finesse

wins, declarer needs only three

heart tricks and the third heart

finesse is unnecessary. If the diamond

finesse loses, declarer must play to

get four tricks from the heart suit.

But that doesn't detract one whit

from East's superb defense.

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Adel Imam — in

The Forgotten

Arabic

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PHILADELPHIA

Bruce Willis — in

DIE HARD 2

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

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by artist Saeed Bitar

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2) Ahlan New World Order

at 9 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday

Arabs pressed to end Israel boycott —GCC

DUBAI (R) — Gulf Arab states are under increasing pressure from international companies to end a boycott of firms dealing with Israel, the secretary-general of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was quoted as saying.

Sheikh Fahim Al Qassimi said the oil-rich GCC states were determined to abide by the boycott although some countries might not be adhering to that in a complete way.

"It is not a secret that Gulf Cooperation Council states are subject to big pressure from international companies supported by Zionism, but we are determined to abide by the decisions of the Arab League," he said.

Sheikh Qassimi, the top official of the GCC which groups Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, was speaking in an interview with the London-based Al Wasat magazine.

"If the boycott decision is amended or cancelled then we

will also abide by that," he said. "It happens that some countries don't abide by the decision in a complete way," he said.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jabber Al Sabah was quoted last week as saying Kuwait was among several Arab states that had disengaged from what he called the indirect boycott of Israel but would continue to apply a direct embargo.

He was quoted as saying Arab states were entitled to relax the indirect boycott when national interests were at stake.

Diplomats said they took the minister to mean Kuwait would still adhere to so-called primary boycott, which bars direct dealing with Israel itself.

They said his remarks indicated Kuwait had eased the secondary boycott of third country firms that invest in Israel or are seen as major contributors to the Israeli economy. A tertiary boycott affects subsidiaries of such companies.

S. Arabia and Bahrain free political prisoners

NICOSIA (R) — A Washington-based human rights group said Saudi Arabia and Bahrain have released a number of political detainees and urged the two countries to free others held for their political beliefs.

The International Committee for Human Rights in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula (ICHA-GAP) said in a statement that Saudi Arabia freed six Shi'ite Muslim prisoners detained for possessing banned political literature and contacts with opposition groups abroad.

It did not say how long they had been held or when they were released.

The statement, dated June 14, quoted the freed men as saying they had been tortured in prison and one of them, Mohammad Hassan Al Shabeeb, was hospitalized in February because of injuries received from torture.

The group has written to the Saudi authorities welcoming the

release of the six and urging them to "take another decision in the near future to release the rest of the detained political prisoners."

As well as Mr. Shabeeb they were named as Hussein Mashameh, Zuheir Safwani, Najji Tahifah, Ali Omran and Madan Abbas.

The group also sent a letter to officials in Bahrain welcoming a decision by Emir Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa to release eight political prisoners who were sentenced to 15 years in jail each in 1981.

It said the emir's pardon also included "Bahraini political exiles who was allowed to return home."

"The committee urged in its letter the officials in Bahrain to release the rest of the political prisoners, allow exiled citizens to return home without any conditions and cancel the government's policy of deporting Bahraini citizens," the statement said.



DASH TO SAFETY: A U.S. Marine escorts a Somali woman and her child to safety seconds before a large explosion ripped through one of warlord Mohammad Farah Aided's weapons depots. U.N. forces have struck Aided's arms depots in retaliatory strike this week (AFP photo)

warlord Mohammad Farah Aided's weapons depots. U.N. forces have struck Aided's arms depots in retaliatory strike this week (AFP photo)

U.S. offers Syria-Israel guarantees

(Continued from page 1)

months ago to seal off the occupied territories.

"The results of these meetings were disappointing. By refusing to intervene, the Americans have left us at the mercy of the Israelis," Palestinian negotiator Ghassan Al Khatib said.

The official of the Palestine People's Party, formerly the communist party, said he would not attend the current round of talks to protest the "unfavourable" U.S. position and Israeli actions in the occupied territories.

Mr. Peres said the peace talks were making progress and he hoped for some "tangible agreements" in the next session with the Palestinians.

But Mr. Peres, speaking to reporters outside a U.N. human rights conference in Vienna, was less confident of progress with the Syrians.

"For the time being he feels the

Syrians enjoy the negotiations more than they enjoy the conclusions," Mr. Peres said.

"I think there is grounds for optimism, and I believe that in spite of all the difficulties we are making headway in our negotiations with the Palestinians," Mr. Peres said.

Mr. Peres' remarks echoed those of Faisal Hussein, head of the Palestinian delegation, who said he expected a "tangible result" from the upcoming round of negotiations.

Mr. Rabin said Monday that Israel and the Arabs had passed the "point of no return" on the road to peace.

"I believe that both we and our Arab partners in the talks have passed the point of no return on the path to peace," he said in a speech.

Earlier on Monday, Mr. Rabin

talked tough, vowing not to cede all the Golan Heights to Syria or make gestures to Palestinians.

— Palestinians want to discuss the status of Jerusalem at the peace talks, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) spokesman Yasser Abed Rabbo said.

"The 10th round of talks will focus on the new situation (Israel) created in the occupied territories to isolate Jerusalem and maintain the economic embargo of Gaza and the West Bank," he told AFP.

The Palestinians raised the Jerusalem issue when they met U.S. officials in Washington last week.

Mr. Abed Rabbo said in Tunis Palestinians wanted to reach a declaration of principles with the Israelis on a five-year interim period of self-rule in the territories.

But he added that last month's U.S. proposal to bridge differences over the proposed declaration was "inappropriate," as a basis of discussion for autonomy arrangements.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Spy first tried to sell Egypt uranium'

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian lawyer hanged for spying had first offered to sell enriched uranium to his government before Israeli intelligence recruited him in Austria, a pro-government newspaper reported Tuesday. Egyptian authorities turned down the offer from Ali Abdul Salam Al Shabeh while he was on a trip home from Vienna, where he had gone in 1990 to complete a doctorate in law. Al Akhbar newspaper said, Shabeh returned to Austria where he delivered secrets about Egyptian "military technology" to Israeli intelligence who recruited him to set up a spy ring, it said. The paper did not say how Shabeh, a civilian, obtained the military secrets. People he tried to recruit reported him to Egyptian authorities who then put him under surveillance and arrested him. He was convicted by a military court in May 1992, and executed on Sunday in a central Cairo prison. A statement from the military prosecutor's office said Shabeh had given military secrets to a foreign state, which officials said was Israel. Israeli defence ministry spokesman Oded Ben Ami said he knew of no Egyptian spying for Israel.

Iran, Turkmenistan set up border commission

MOSCOW (R) — Iran and the former Soviet Republic of Turkmenistan will set up a permanent bilateral commission to deal with problems over their common border, Russia's Itar-Tass news agency said. The decision was taken at a meeting in the Turkmen capital Ashgabat between Iran's deputy foreign minister for border affairs, Mostafa Mir Anvarian, and military representatives from the Turkmen border guards. A representative of the Turkmen guards, Vladimir Shunovich, said that since the border regulations were agreed 30 years ago, natural disasters and the "arbitrary activities" of the population had caused the border to change.

South Korea joins U.N. force in Somalia

SEOUL (AP) — South Korea launched its first U.N. peacekeeping operation Tuesday with the advance shipment of construction equipment and materials to Somalia aboard a Panamanian freighter. An army engineering corps of 250 men will follow July 14 to start the operations north of Mogadishu. They will build air-raid shelters, water and drainage systems and repair roads and bridges. South Korea became a member of the United Nations in 1991.

Canada ends peacekeeping role in Cyprus

NICOSIA (R) — Canadian troops ended 29 years as peacekeepers in Cyprus Tuesday, slashing the size of the U.N. force on the divided island by a third. "The Canadian contingent ceases operations just before midnight tonight," a spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) told Reuters Tuesday. "Their sector will be adjusted to the remaining line units of the British and Austrian contingents," he added. The departure of the 514 Canadian troops, less than a year after Denmark pulled out its contingent, signals growing international impatience with lack of progress to reunite the island's Greek and Turkish-Cypriots under a federation.

Algeria asks Germany to extradite FIS officials

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algeria has formally asked Germany to extradite two senior members of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), including a son of jailed FIS leader Abassi Madani, judicial sources said here, contradicting a German statement. Algeria applied Sunday to the German foreign ministry for the extradition of Rabah Kebir, the FIS's spokesman abroad, and on June 3 for that of Oussama Abassi Madani, the sources said. On Monday, German Justice Minister Sabine Leutheusser-Scharenberger said Algeria had not yet asked for the extradition of the two men, both of whom have been sentenced to death in connection with a bomb attack that killed nine people at Algiers airport last August. Mr. Kebir, 36, and Mr. Abassi, 23, were arrested by German police on June 7 on the strength of an international arrest warrant transmitted to Interpol.

India launches major offensive in Kashmir

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian security forces have launched their largest combined offensive against rebels in the strife-torn state of Kashmir, the Press Trust of India said Tuesday. A high-ranking state official told the news agency in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital, that the "biggest-ever joint operation" would restore normalcy and pave the way for polls by the end of the year, the first since 1987.

Shooting in paralysed Congolese capital

BRAZZAVILLE (R) — Political protest paralysed Congo's capital for the fourth straight day Tuesday and residents reported that opposition militants had fired shots in the air. Witnesses said a young girl was killed by a stray of bullet overnight in the city's Ouquenze district. If confirmed, her death would raise to four the number of people killed since June 6, when a second round of voting was held in parliamentary elections declared invalid by the opposition.

Moroccan home hit by arson in Germany

BONN (R) — Two Moroccan women and four children escaped injury by fleeing through a first-storey window from a fire apparently laid by racists in western Germany, prosecutors said Tuesday. A swastika was spray-painted on a house wall and prosecutors investigating the Monday night blaze near Moenchengladbach said they assumed it was an attack by right-wing radicals.

Nigerian party wants poll scrapped

LAGOS (R) — The party running second in Nigeria's presidential election called Tuesday for the results of last Saturday's poll to be cancelled because it was "massively rigged," state radio said. The radio quoted a senior official of the National Republican Convention (NRC) as saying the party had lodged its protest with the National Electoral Commission (NEC).

COLUMN

Commons roped in to defeat

LONDON (AFP) — The House of Lords collectively honed their muscles against the House of Commons late Monday, successfully pulling MPs to defeat for the sixth year running in the annual tug-of-war contest. The Lords team, captained by Lord Brougham and Vaux, gave the heavy-ho to the Commons, hopes, in aid of a charity appeal to help cancer victims. The MPs failed, despite coaching from former Olympic runner Sebastian Coe, and cheer-leading from government chief whip Richard Ryder — well-practised after months of exhorting MPs to action in Maasricht debates. Organisers hoped the event would raise £75,000 (\$12,500) to help establish cancer care nurses in hospitals throughout the country.

31 split \$9.2m in MacArthur

CHICAGO (AP) — Gospel singer Marion Williams said Monday that her \$374,000 MacArthur

fellowship was the best thing to happen to her since she found

Jesus. "I feel like this is a blessing," said Miss Williams, the

first singer to be honoured by the

MacArthur Foundation's annual

awards, which often are called

genius grants. This year's 31 winners

also include energy efficiency

expert Amory Bloch Lovins,

national public radio creator Wil-

liam H. Sienkiewicz and midwifery

advocate Ruth Watson Lubie,

who said she was "just basking in

the news." The 18 men and 13

women split \$9.2 million in grants

from \$220,000 to \$25,000, paid over five years.

Recipients were nominated by

anonymous talent scouts seeking

"originality, dedication to creat-

ive pursuits and capacity for self-

education," said Ted Hearne,

spokesman for the Chicago-based

foundation. The grants, which

vary in size depending on the

recipient's age, can be used for

any purpose.

Sen. Specter recovering from surgery

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — U.S.

Sen. Arlen Specter was conscious

and talking with his family within

an hour after surgery to remove

what doctors believe was a benign

brain tumour, his son said. Sen.

Specter, best known for his tough

questioning of Anita Hill and

proposing the single-bill theory

in the John F. Kennedy assassina-

tion, was "in good spirits and

neurologically normal" after the

2½-hour operation Monday at

the Hospital of the University of

Pennsylvania, Shamir Specter

said. The operation came on the

same day that Gov. Robert

P. Casey underwent a successful

heart-liver transplant in hopes of

curing a potentially fatal disease.

Shamir Specter said the growth in

his father's head apparently was a

meningioma, a slow-growing,

hard tumour that is rarely cancer-

ous. Tests to make a final deter-

mination of whether the tumour

was malignant or benign were to

take several days. The 2-inch

(5-centimetre) tumour was

attached to the skull behind the

senator's forehead, below the

hairline on the left side, which is

less threatening than a growth

actually on the brain, Shamir

Specter said.

Imperial banquets celebrate Japan royal wedding

TOKYO (AP) — Guests toasted

with rice wine and feasted on abalone

and whole sea breams Tuesday in

the first of six gala banquets to

celebrate the marriage of Crown

Prince Naruhito and Masako

Owada, a former diplomat. Naru-

hito, 33, the heir to the 1,500-

year-old chrysanthemum throne,

appeared in courtials at the main

table with his parents, Emperor

Akihito and Empress Michiko.

Wednesday became the second

commoner since World War II to

marry a future emperor, smiled

meekly next to him. She wore a

beaded hat and gown on apricot

with a pin of clustered pearls and

a matching necklace. Tuesday's

40-minute meal was the first of six

to be held each afternoon and

evening through Thursday. All

together, some 2,700 guests will

attend. Foreign guests, including

outgoing U.S. Ambassador

Michael Armacost and his wife

Bonny, are invited to the final

banquet Thursday night, where

forks and knives reportedly will

be at hand, though the menu is to

be Japanese. A controversy over

the national anthem would be played.

The anthem, "Kimigayo," is a

song in praise of the emperor,

and some leftist-leaning and

pacifist Japanese claim it is sym-

bolic of World War II militarism.

Black market for foreign cigarettes refuses to grey

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Barring the lifting of a government ceiling on imports or a dramatic shift in consumption, all indications are that the black market of foreign-made cigarettes will continue to thrive with prices remaining high, market sources said Tuesday.

The recent infusion of a shipment of Ministry of Supply-imported cigarettes has not helped much to address the acute shortage in the market as a result of dwindling volume of contraband supply, they said.

Official sources said the Ministry of Supply, which holds the sole authority to import cigarettes for the non-diplomatic market, was expecting another shipment of various brands in the next few days.

"The arrival of the shipment would help alleviate the pressure in the market," said an official source. But dealers disagreed, saying that if the ministry continues its new policy of limiting the quantity available to them, there is little chance that the black market, particularly of Marlboros, one of the most popular brands, would subside.

"We are now getting one carton (of 50 ten-packs) of Marlboro every three days," said one dealer who, like all others who spoke to the Jordan Times, preferred anonymity. "The quantity stays with us for less than a couple of hours."

Regular Marlboro (smuggled) continued to be sold between JD2.25 to JD2.5 a pack this week, compared to the JD1.2 price set by the Ministry of Supply.

Officially imported Marlboro was being panned off at JD 1.8 per pack in the black market.

Some grocers and supermarkets were resorting to "under-the-counter" sales of Marlboro while others limited their sales to favoured customers. Concentrated efforts to nab violators of Ministry of Supply regulations do not seem to have borne fruit.

Black market prices went up in the face of diminishing supply in the wake of a tightening of Syrian borders against smuggling from Lebanon and the imposition of strict measures at its exit points to Jordan; Jordanian authorities adopted similar action on this side of the frontier, sealing off most known smuggling routes across the desert.

A hefty travel tax imposed on Iraqis by the Baghdad government has drastically cut the number of Iraqis travelling to Jordan; by extension a drying up of the flow of smuggling from Iraq.

A packet of Marlboro was selling at 110 Syrian pounds (approximately JD1.5) in the Damascus market, traders said.

"If one buys at this price in Damascus and somehow gets it into Jordan, then it is natural that the selling price here will be high since everyone down the chain wants a cut," said a market expert, adding that the main retail outlet for smuggled cigarettes were street boys and small grocers rather than large supermarkets.

A conservative estimate puts the number of Marlboro smokers in Jordan at 10,000. Based on an average daily consumption of one pack, the estimated annual consumption, dealers say, is around 7,500 cartons, or 3,750,000 packs.

At prevailing international prices, this should cost around \$2.5 million; the net street value in Jordan today will be around triple this amount.

The last consignment brought in by the ministry around the time of the 'Eid Al Adha was 150 cartons; enough for one week.

A government decision aimed at protecting the local tobacco industry limits Ministry of Supply imports to two million packs every year. Ministry imports were nowhere near the ceiling in the past years.

"We don't know yet whether we will import the fully permitted quantity this year," an official source told the Jordan Times. But, the source acknowledged, "there is an increasing trend in the market to switch to ministry-imported cigarettes."

Around 50 per cent of the ministry imports are Marlboros; meaning less than one-third or even one-fourth of the estimated consumption. Needless to say, smuggling accounts for the rest, but with the dwindling volume of contraband entering the country, black market dealers are having a field day.

The Ministry of Supply imports five brands of cigarettes: Rothmans (king size, international and light), Kent (deluxe and light), Silk Cut (four kinds), and Marlboro (regular and light).

"All other brands in the market,

such as L&M, Merit, Camel, Kennedy etc. are smuggled," said the official source. "A few cartons enter the market from the duty-free franchise allowed to diplomats."

The minimum quantity of any brand that the ministry, which deals directly with manufacturers, could order is 400 cartons. As such, the source explained, "we don't want to take chances with a brand which may not sell well" and hence the total absence of brands such as Dunhill, State Express, Carier etc. which are very popular in the Gulf states.

The next ministry shipment will include another brand, Viceroy, which will be sold cheaper than any other brand, the source said. Inquiries made by the Jordan Times brought to light several features of the situation:

— The Ministry of Supply does not intend to seek any increase in the ceiling imposed on it. "We have a local tobacco industry and we don't want to encourage consumption of foreign cigarettes by the Jordanians," said the official source.

— No import licence is given to private sector importers except those catering to the duty-free trade.

The ministry excludes all local agents or distributors from its purchases. "We have a strict policy in this context," said the official source. "If we know the supplier paid any commission to anyone on our purchases, we take strict action." The policy, officials explained, is aimed at getting a better price for ministry purchases.

— Shifting patterns in consumption have not reached a point where

there is a marked turn to local brands. "It might take years before we can achieve this," said a market expert.

— Anti-smoking campaigners believe that the time is opportune to intensifying their drive, particularly that some smokers would be prone to quitting altogether rather than switching to cheaper brands.

— A good number of Marlboro smokers still prefer their brand and pay higher prices in the smuggled market or settle for the ministry-imported brand, which many smokers describe as inferior.

But, said a dealer, the latest batch of Marlboros imported by the ministry is almost of the same quality and flavour as of the types switched to Kent and other brands. Some smokers agreed, others did not.

— Amman-Damascus-Amman drivers, once a key source to the black market, are no longer able to bring in cigarettes. "The customs